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COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS IN THE PARISH MINISTRY: AN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY OF FIFTY PROTESTANT MINISTERS IN A NEW ENGLAND CITY

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PREFACE

On the following pages is the story of a research program which was carried out by fifty Protestant ministers of Lynn, Massachusetts, in the fall and winter of 1956 - 1957. Vital information about each and every communication which took place on one weekday and one Sunday was systematically recorded. The purpose was to find answers to a host of basic questions such as: What does a minister talk about? How does a minister keep in touch with the world? To whom does a minister talk? And why does he talk to them? The answers to these questions permit the formulation of problems of communication which are facing parish ministers today.

In the opening chapter the new meaning of the old idea of communication is found in the feverish activity provided by modern instruments of communication, and the new positions which they have created in public relations, advertising, radio, photography, computer mechanisms and radar. Parallel development in the theory of communication is seen to have significance for a wide variety of scholars, professional workers, and businessmen, since communications are now recognized as the matrix in which all human activities are embedded. Not only are other occupations more clearly seen in the light of their communicative functions, but the changing roles of the clergy are also viewed in the changeless perspectives of communication, communication remaining characteristic and essential to the vocation of the ministry

in all of its historical forms.

The historical background of this original study is found in the research literature of communication and in a small body of research literature on the ministry. In the second chapter four of the most relevant types of communication research are noted for their design, methodology, and results. Research on the ministry typified in the work of Hartshorne and Froyd, Murray Leiffer, Richard Niebuhr, and Samuel Blizzard is presented with the same objective in view.

In contrast to the other studies on the ministry, carried out largely by questionnaires, the present study is set in the context of action research, the data of real life being recorded very close to the moment of action. It is the first study to deal exclusively with primary data of communication, to employ extensive personal interviews, and to be carried out on a virtually complete sample of the professional Protestant clergy in a sizable urban neighborhood. Chapter two sets this study in the perspective of other research, and chapter three, in which the research design and methodology is carefully outlined, prepares the reader for the presentation of the major findings in chapters four and five.

In presenting the major findings we return to the four main questions regarding the minister's communications: What? How? Who? and Why? Content analysis yields information on the amounts of subject matter falling within the role of administrator, organizer, pastor, priest, preacher, and teacher. Analysis of the means of communication indicates the frequencies with which they are used and their occurence through the day. Personal means, group means, and mass media all

receive attention.

The personal network of communication is traced to find out how often the minister is in touch with outsiders and insiders, males and females, persons of different occupational and marital status, and persons of every age. In evaluating possible motives in communication we seek to assess the effect of certain personal factors on communication such as how much we like a person, how often we need him, how often the Church needs him, and how pressed we were for time.

Having presented these findings, we turn in chapter six to the formulation of five crucial problems in communication which appear to be supported by the research data, problems involved in reaching vocational fulfilment, in meeting the popular demands of the modern parish, the growing threat of superficiality in what we do and say, the disturbing effect of our personal preferences, and the problem of sensitive reception of communication.

Chapter seven, then, is a daring effort to formulate a strategy of communication to match the five problems asserted to have crucial importance to the ministry and the Church. In this attempt we draw upon additional findings from our research bearing on the relationship of church size and staff size to the minister's actual communications. Large emphasis is given to psychological considerations looking for the heart of the difficulty in the personality and motivation of the pastor. Guided by the insights of psychology, a strategy of communication is developed which incorporates important elements of Christian value in

a manner strongly reminiscent of the early Christian Church.

A brief final chapter succinctly reviews the entire study from its origins in theory and research to the formulation of a communication strategy and a statement of ultimate objectives.

Easter 1958

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CHAPTER I

THE MINISTER AS COMMUNICATOR

The Definition and Significance of Communication

Communication is a new term which stands for an age old process. It is as old as one man talking to another and as new as the Explorer Satellite speaking to the world from outer space. While communication itself is as old as civilization it has been only in recent times that we have come to think of it in more abstract terms as a phenomenon to be considered in its own right.

The word communication is defined as "the imparting, conveying or exchange of information or ideas whether by speech, writing or sign." To communicate means "to share or enjoy in common with" and is derived from the Latin communicare "to make common." It is thus the basis of such important words as community and communion. The word is also commonly used today to refer to that which is communicated, such as a letter or its contents, or to the means of access between two or more persons or places.

Perhaps the earliest technical use of the term in our literature was in describing the flow of traffic and mail across national boundaries, a concern which was reflected on an international level by conferences on freedom of communication and transit. With the development of radio and telephone, however, communication was more often associated with these specific means alone. It was not until June 19, 1934 that the Federal

Radio Commission, for example, was reorganized as the United States Federal Communications Commission, a change which not only reflected great expansion in the world of communications, but may also symbolize a general shift of attention from specific media to a larger frame of meaning.

Specific means of communication still receive great attention in a country where they are found everywhere at hand. Television has joined radio and telephone in the average household, daily newspapers are delivered to the door, tape recorders, phonographs, home motion picture cameras, and slide projectors are commonly owned. Printed matter in the form of low-priced books and magazines circulate in volumes never expected in the past. Modern means of transportation including underground subways, autos, busses and seagoing vessels on the surface, and airplanes and jets in the sky all facilitate communication. By these means we not only arrive at our destination sooner and see more people, but often in the process of reaching the destination we find ourselves in groups, where we are an audience to the advertiser, and a traveling companion to our neighbors en route.

Not far from the average citizen in his normal daily activities are other common communication devices, like the two-way radio of the taxicab, teletype and dictating equipment, and the Western Union Telegraph office. A bit farther from the average citizen and more mysterious are the hilltop radar screens which gather information from the sky, or the more awesome electronic computers which store up vast quantities of information, analyze it according to a prearranged code, issue

orders, and monitor progress. This overall progress from automobile to automation, from telegraph to television has made communication a popular word in our language.

Not half the significance of communication in the modern sense, however, is expressed in these instruments and processes. Equally important is the parellel development of communication theory in the realm of social science. Turning attention from specific media to communication itself, sociologists, psychologists, and psychiatrists have found new conceptual models for their work. Communication concepts have provided new perspective in the study of human behavior and opened new avenues of research. The connection between the words communication, common, and community has not been overlooked.

The eminent sociologist, Charles H. Cooley, as early as 1909 began to consider the influence of communication upon society. He noted the revolutionary change wrought by communication during the nineteenth century as a result of advances in printing and the reproductive arts of photography and photo-engraving. As a result of better travel conditions, expanded postal service, swift communication by telegraph and telephone Cooley saw the growth of a new public consciousness, sense of moral unity, and humanitarian concern between nations and classes. He viewed the communication process as the binding force in organized society, and in a penetrating chapter on "The Significance of Communication" described it as "the mechanism through which human relations exist and develop." [1]

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[1]Charles Cooley, "The Significance of Communication," Reader in Public Opinion and Communication, ed. Bernard Berelson and Morris Janowitz, (enlarged edition, Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1953) pp. 145-153.

Also writing on communication and sociology, Robert E. Park in 1939 emphasized further that communication makes possible a concensus and understanding among the individual components of a group which makes it a cultural unity, a true social group. Park also quotes John Dewey as saying, "Society not only continues to exist by transmission, by communication, but may fairly be said to exist in transmission, in communication." [1]

Communication is now seen as a crucial factor in all forms of social organization, from the most primitive societies to urbanized industrial society. The history of civilization for example, seems to be marked by a progressive increase in the radius of communication, indicating that empires were limited in scope by the available means of communication and their skill in using them. Norbert Weiner has observed that early communal societies were held down to a certain optimal size of a few million persons until great empires like that of Persia and Rome developed vastly improved means of communication, and so transcended this limitation.[2] Thus communication is the stuff which holds people together in social organization, and which determines the character and effectiveness of that organization.

Language, an obvious component in all communication, has been analyzed from the new perspective of its contribution to clear or confused meaning. It is also recognized to contain the traditions and

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[1]Robert E. Park, "Reflections on Communication and Culture," American Journal of Sociology, XLIV, 1939, 191-205.

[2]Norbert Weiner, The Human Use of Human Beings - Cybernetics and Society, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1954,) p. 91.

values of a given society. This general interest in language has led to the specialty of semantics, in which such men as Korzybski, Wendell Johnson and Hayakawa have played a leading role.

In the new field of industrial relations pioneer writers such as Elton Mayo and Chester Barnard have ascribed a central role to communication. Of the three chief problems facing modern large-scale industry, Mayo declared we are least competent in "organizing for sustained cooperation," mainly because of a deficiency in "the capacity of an individual to communicate his feelings and ideas to another, and the capacity of groups to communicate effectively and intimately with each other."[1] In describing the psychology of administration in modern industry he refers to the new method of human control as "the capacity to receive communications from others and to respond to the attitudes and ideas of others in such a fashion as to promote congenial participation in a common task."[2]

The role of communication in therapy is receiving increasing attention. Through techniques of sociometry advanced by Jacob Moreno the communication network of small groups is traced and the resulting patterns used to reveal differences of relationship and role among the members of the group. Thus direction and flow of communication constitute signals with

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[1] Elton Mayo, The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945.)

[2] Wright Mills, The Contributions of Sociology To Studies of Industrial Relations (Champaign, Illinois: Industrial Relations Research Association, 1949), pp. 214-215.

therapeutic significance.[1] Communication concepts are a fundamental feature of Washington's William Allanson White Institute of Psychiatry, led most recently by the late Harry Stack Sullivan, advocate of "interpersonal psychiatry." Sullivan viewed the psychiatric interview as an intensive relationship in which expert ability to send and receive communications was the essence of therapy.[2] Stanton and Schwartz report a study of communications in a mental hospital in which the attempt was made to establish a therapeutic community on the basis of communication reforms among the entire hospital staff.[3]

Dr. Jurgen Ruesch, of the University of California Medical School, asserts that mental illness can be defined and understood in terms of certain communication failures. Psychosis, for example, is a condition arising from a misinterpretation of messages which are received, a failure in perception. The schisophrenic patient appears unable to make proper interpretations of incoming messages and does not correct the information he already possesses, leaving him snarled in a web of delusion. The neurotic, on the other hand, has difficulties in the area of transmission. His tendency is to flood his listeners with messages, in a compulsive attempt to coerce them into roles which they are unwilling to assume, resulting in unsatisfactory relationships, frustration, and failure.[4]

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[1]Jacob L. Moreno, "Contributions of Sociometry to Research Methodology in Sociology," American Sociological Review, (XII, 1947), pp.287-292.

[2]Harry Stack Sullivan, The Psychiatric Interview, (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1953).

[3]Alfred Stanton and Morris Schwartz, The Mental Hospital: A Study of Institutional Participation in Psychiatric Illness and Treatment, (New York: Basic Books, 1954).

[4]Jurgen Ruesch and Gregory Bateson, Communication, The Social Matrix of Psychiatry, (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1951), pp. 79-89.

In cooperation with Weldon Kees, Ruesch has also extended the application of communication concepts to the everyday world of signs and symbols, the realm of non-verbal communication. In this field of interest, little explored, attention has been called to the large vocabulary of signs and symbols commonly used in America today. By making many of these signs explicit, this research team opens an old package full of modern marvels which play a vital role in all communication activities today.[1]

Although the study of communication is a very recent specialization in the history of science, it has gained rapid momentum. The attention it has attracted from a variety of professions is consistent with the vital role of communication in the modern world. Educators are charged with the heavy responsibility of communicating vital information from one generation to another. Managers of industry, alert to the problems of competition, are anxious to facilitate the flow of ideas and information among executives and workers. Public relations officers work full time to expedite the flow of information and opinion between the company, the union, and the community. Social scientists, working in an age of racial integration, have been taught by bitter experience the cost of inadequate communication between races and classes, and even between public officials and the public.

Modern scientific research has become so specialized that one scientist has difficulty in communicating the meaning of his findings to another, creating the need for "research teams" to assure coordinated

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[1] Jurgen Reusch and Weldon Kees, Nonverbal Communication, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1956).

effort. Biologists seek greater knowledge of feedback phenomena so crucial to adaptation and survival, while leaders in automation and computer technology seek more efficient forms of communication and more economic principles for coding and decoding to speed the extraction of vital information from large masses of data.

Philosophers and theologians join in the study of communication eager to note the implicit and explicit values which are the foundation for human relationships. Politicians, concerned to reach certain segments of the public, are cautious in their choice of media, and plan to deliver major addresses from different geographical regions. Advertisers have an obvious stake in communication, since it is important to know what people like and dislike.

Thus the study of communication has become the meetingplace for business men, social scientists, and workers from many fields. The significance of this universal interest is attested by Jurgen Ruesch a research psychiatrist, and Gregory Bateson, an anthropologist, who seek a unified theory of communication as the first step toward a unified theory of human behavior. These authors believe that communication provides the only scientific model which will enable us to explain the physical, intrapersonal, interpersonal, and cultural aspects of events within a single system. In communication theory they find the common denominator capable of bridging the gap between all fields of social science, since "communication is the matrix in which all human activities are embedded."[1]

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[1]Jurgen Ruesch and Gregory Bateson, Communication, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1951), pp. 3-20.

The Minister As Communicator

To communicate is to share, impart, or exchange information by speech, writing, or sign. The minister tries to do that every day of the week. Communication is "the binding force" which holds a community in existence. The minister is called to the head of such a community and feels responsibility for it. Communication research has explored the uses of mass media. The minister uses these media. Social scientists have studied the dynamics of communication in small groups. The minister works continually in such groups to conduct the work of the church. By every standard the minister is a communicator.

Yet it is not only because he communicates frequently that the minister can be thought of as a communicator, but also because of the historic meaning of his vocation. He is called for the purpose of communicating, and invested with specific duties in that sphere. The sentence of ordination in the ritual of the Methodist church, for example, is this: "Take thou authority as an elder in the church to preach the Word of God, and to administer the holy Sacraments in the congregation." Here are two specific duties of ministerial office spelled out in communication terms. The order to preach needs little elaboration; if there is any general understanding about the Protestant ministry, it is probably this; it means preaching. The second charge calls attention to an older literal meaning of communication, "to commune" persons, i.e. to give them communion, or more generally, to bring them into the common fellowship of Christ's church. Here is the deeper original meaning of communion, having something in common

with Christ, being with Him.

The petitional prayer following the words of ordination and laying on of hands, is also characteristic of the ancient significance of communication in the ministry. This petition invokes the blessing of God,

> ...that thy Word spoken by him may never be spoken in vain. Grant also that we may have grace to receive what he shall deliver out of thy Word as the means of our salvation, and that in all our words and deeds we may seek thy glory, and the increase of thy Kingdom through Jesus Christ our Lord. [1]

In this passage of ritual the ancient importance of the word is prominent, both the word of the minister, and the Word of God. That the words should not be spoken "in vain" is an ancient concern, for words are at once means of salvation and a means for glorifying God and increasing his Kingdom.

Equally important for the work of the minister is the stress upon "the Word" as God's attempt to reach out to man. God has made himself known to prophets, priests and teachers, and to his people Israel. These men "saw" the mighty hand of God at work, they "heard" the word of the Lord, but it was God who reached out to communicate. The historic mission of Jesus portrayed in the New Testament is therefore seen in the light of a continued discourse.

> God who at sundry times and in diverse manner spoke in times past unto our fathers through the prophets, has, at the end of these days, spoken to us through His Son. [2]

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[1] The Methodist Book of Worship (New York: The Methodist Publishing House, 1944) p. 438.

[2] Hebrews 1: 1-3, King James Version.

Jesus is viewed as the ancient word of God become flesh.

> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.[1]

In Christian theology he becomes the visual image of God who had never been seen by mortal eye, the word of God whose actual voice had never been heard by mortal ear.[2] The title of Immanuel, reserved by Old Testament prophets for the Messiah, is conferred upon him, "God-with-us."

The God of the Bible, therefore, is seen as one who takes initiative in creating man in his own image, speaks forth to men in commandments, watches over them as a Shepherd, and invites them into relationship with Him as the fulfilment of their being. To proclaim this initiative of God in the life of mankind, an initiative which continues in the present day and leads to the fulfilment of life's purpose, becomes a central commission of the preacher. He is to see that God's words, and particularly God's Word as revealed in Jesus Christ, are communicated to and understood by the present generation. Divine-human communication provides the larger context in which the minister himself works as communicator.

In still another way, the minister and the Church communicate, by demonstration. Words are not the only carriers of information. Life has a language of its own which may obscure the effort of a thousand words. A minister wins a reputation among his parishioners apart from the words which fall from his lips, just as the reputation of the church itself grows, not so much by what its members say, but by what people say of its members. This type of meaning circulates by means of directly per-

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[1]John 1:14, Revised Standard Version.

[2]F. W. Dillistone, Christianity and Communication, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), pp. 46-47.

ceived values and objectives. What a church is doing, how it chooses to do it, what its activities come to mean in the lives of its members, and through them to the community itself, becomes known; it is communicated. If, therefore, the normal communications of the ministry are distorted, perverted or confused, by whatever pressures from the inner community or from the larger community, then the whole purpose of the ministry is in jeopardy. The "sermon" which is being heard is not the sermon intended, the message of the church is not the message of good news. The fellowship of the people of Christ is not the koinonia, and broken communication is not restored.

Perhaps the most indispensable dimension of the vocation of ministry is the dimension of community. It is to a community of the faithful that the minister is called to have pastoral oversight. When persons are brought into the fellowship of the Church, into communion, they enter upon a community life within the Church based directly upon the Christian principles which they now hold in common with the others. The maintenance of such community is every person's responsibility in the Protestant view, but chief responsibility and oversight inevitably falls on the minister.

In creating such a community and in maintaining it, the local pastor must somehow take cognizance of the larger community which threatens to engulf it, for in the larger world of communication, the Pastor's voice is just one voice among many which compete for the attention and loyalty of his congregation. Like the messages of his radio competitors the pastor's messages are subject to jamming, static, thinning and fading, and even power failure. In fact, the tendency for

things to break down into confusion and disorganization which the communication experts refer to as "entropy,"[1] and which they so much dread, is nowhere more apparent than in the work of the Protestant minister. Such common daily events as radio serials, television give-aways, and modern advertising all loudly represent a community of values which is often foreign to Christian values and in conflict with them.

Modern mass media are widely employed by secular communicators who reach into every home and capture audiences of every age down to the smallest child, bombarding them with secular values. So great are the changes being wrought by these powerful media that pastor and parishioner alike find themselves in a new situation requiring new strategies which have not by any means been worked out. Nevertheless, the pastor knows that he must create a zone of Christian order within the larger network of community relationships, drawing and holding persons together in Christian fellowship, however unfamiliar or unpopular the values of this small community must be as it stands apart from the world.

To maintain community within community evokes tension in the minister and in the members alike. Still greater control is needed to follow the New Testament commission "to go into all the world" with the message of Christian good news, that is, to all ethnic and cultural groups, across all boundaries of nation, class, race, and language, to bring into communion and thereafter hold in communication those who accept the message of Christ.

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[1]Norbert Weiner, The Human Use of Human Beings, (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1954), Chapter II.

Hendrik Kraemer, in a slender volume of lectures, makes a brilliant contribution to our understanding of the church as a community, drawing upon biblical perspectives. Kraemer finds in the Scriptures the clear message that man is made for communication with God and with each other, and he sees the possibility of right communication and community hinging on right communication with God. In the recurring theme of love in such crucial passages as the Old Testament Shema and the love commandment of Jesus, Kraemer sees a state of mutual transparency, disposability, and responsiveness in which true communication comes to full fruition. The "koinonia" is thus the community of God's people held together in Christ's love, and in communication with God. The God of the Lord's Prayer is not a God of isolated religious individuals, but of a people, the people of his Kingdom in which communication will be perfect and unbroken. Likewise he treats defectiveness in communication as a sign as well as a consequence of the distortion of the divinely-willed order of existence. The biblical record of God's efforts to restore man to right relationship with him is the model for the re-creation of true unfrustrated communication between men. This is one of the deep functions of the Church, to be the place of this re-creation of true communication, in true community founded through Christ, the embodiment of renewed humanity.[1]

Changing Roles of the Clergy

The important link between the vocation of the ministry and the

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[1]Hendrik Kraemer, The Communication of the Christian Faith, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956), pp. 14-21.

community of the faithful must be explored further. In the history of the Church the commission of the minister to preach remains a central function but becomes surrounded in various times and places by other central responsibilities with equal precedent in the early Church. We can assume from the episode recorded in Acts 6: 1-6 that preaching was the task given highest priority at that time, but there were other essential tasks equally characteristic of the ministry as a whole, such as pastoral care, teaching, administrative and organizational work, and the priestly function in worship and rites. To understand how all these responsibilities were shouldered one must grasp the conception of vocation and ministry in its original meaning.

All the members of the early Church considered themselves called into service, participators in the drama of redemption and reconciliation through Christ. In fact this keen sense of shared responsibility was in substance "the ministry." It was <u>from</u> the ministry of the congregation that certain gifted members were chosen to perform special service.

In the Jerusalem Church described in Acts, for example, top leadership seems to rest with Peter, and to a lesser extent with John, but with the assistance of the whole apostolic company. When misunderstandings arise with regard to the service of the common meal, a group of seven "deacons" are selected to oversee this aspect of the work. The total burden of communication was much further divided through the aid of "elders" or "presbyters" who shared in the governing of the congre-

gation, and from whose number the preachers and teachers were drawn.[1] This custom of ruling elders was carried over from the Jewish model of organization and included those outstanding members of the congregation who were elected and ordained to this supervisory work.

The term "elder" found in New Testament documents is thought to be an inclusive term which takes in the preacher, the teacher, and the prophet as well as the server (deacon) and general overseer (bishop). To the council of elders as a whole would fall the burden of congregational rule and guidance, but to individuals of the council would fall responsibility for specific work, according to their spiritual gifts.

Eventually it was the office of bishop which most resembled the office of the parish minister today, since the bishop was the head of the local church. However the office of bishop evolved, from the need for a "president" at the Eucharist, or the need for central authority in a period of crisis, or from the pattern laid down by Jesus himself as head of the disciples, bishops were given the place of highest authority in congregation and council by the end of the second century.[2] What is of utmost importance to recognize is that in this early Church all the responsibilities of the ministry did not come to rest on the

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[1] I Timothy 5: 17.

[2] John Knox, "The Ministry in the Primitive Church," The Ministry in Historical Perspectives, ed. H. Richard Niebuhr and Daniel D. Williams (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. 24.

bishop's shoulders. He was the chief minister, the overseer, but it was the congregation which assumed the burdens of the ministry as a whole, the bishop himself being called out from the congregation for a particular task of ministry. Thus the complex functions of preaching, teaching, healing, and administering, of organizing, pastoral care, and priestly leadership, the functions of the ministry as a whole, were not in any sense performed by the minister, but by all the ministers together as a congregation.

In the first century the primary role of the chief minister was preaching; he functioned in other ways, taking his place beside a host of other ministers, but this was his principal responsibility. In succeeding centuries, though the idea of the ministering community disappeared, the parish minister maintained a primary emphasis upon one phase of ministerial responsibility or another, according to the demands of the age and the abilities of the ministers. Richard Niebuhr characterizes these historic shifts in the primary role of the minister in distinguishing between the early Roman concept of the "priest," for whom the sacramental function was primary; the medieval "pastoral ruler" who felt primary responsibility for governing the journey of his people past the perilous pitfalls of hell to the safety of heaven; the "preacher of the Word" who emerged during the Reformation to emphasize the authority of the scriptures and the words of God rather than the decrees of the Church; in later days of pietism and revival the "evangelist" whose primary role was to appeal for a change of heart and life as a result of spiritual experience; and finally, in modern times, the

"pastoral director," who works from an office to direct the complex network of personal and social activities which seem characteristic of the churches in our time.[1]

Since New Testament days when there was a specialization of ministry within the congregation, there have been other forms of specialization in the parish ministry, if nothing more than a sharing of classic functions with a hierarchy. The appearance of the monks in medieval times, and later of various orders within the ministry were efforts at specialization by which ministers assumed the primary role of teacher, scholar, solitary, missionary, or benevolent worker. In recent times, specialization has continued with the creation of youth workers, ministers of music, religious education specialists, bible society executives, administrators of benevolent and charitable institutions, chaplains to schools, hospitals, and armies, editors, and ecumenical leaders. By such specialization the ministers of the present day seek to match their several abilities against the special needs of the times, all in accord with the responsibilities of the entire ministry as it rested originally on the congregation of the faithful. The significance of the changes in the minister and the ministry in twenty centuries of intervening time, especially in the light of problems which have recently arisen in consequence has not been fully assessed. It should be clear, however, on the basis of what is already known that in all the tasks of the ministry, through the whole diverse range of specialization, communication remains the essence of the ministerial vocation.

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[1]Richard Niebuhr, The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry (New York: Harper Brothers, 1956), pp. 48-94.

CHAPTER II

PERSPECTIVES IN RESEARCH

The Rise of Research on Communication

A growing appreciation for the usefulness of certain concepts of communication has led in very recent years to a considerable amount of scientific research. The variety of this interest and research has been illustrated in the study of semantics, sociometry, public relations and opinion research, and in psychiatry. Four major classes of research have a particular relation to the ministry and require special mention: the study of the effects of the mass media of communication, communication surveys on a community-wide basis, scientific manipulation of communication variables in small experimental groups, and the analysis of communication features in real life organizations.

It was in the study of the effects of the mass media of communication that communication research got underway. Development in this field is best traced by Carl I. Hovland in a comprehensive review of nearly 150 books and articles.[1] The effect of books, magazines and newspapers upon public opinion, social causes and political elections was an early interest. Motion pictures and educational films for classroom use were

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[1]Carl I. Hovland, "The Effects of the Mass Media of Communication," Handbook of Social Psychology, ed. Gardner Lindzey (Cambridge, Mass.: Addison Wesley Publishing Co., 1954), II, 1062-1103.

checked for attitude change and duration of effect upon viewers. Investigators related the effectiveness of radio broadcasts with length of sentences, length of broadcast, use of repetition, etc. Others observed the effect of radio and television on the reading of books, family recreation, etc. Comparative studies were made of the effect of different intensities of fear, rational versus emotional-type appeals, between the conversational and dynamic delivery of news, the effectiveness of implicit and explicit thoughts, and oral versus printed matter in opinion change. Generally these studies indicated that effectiveness depends upon such factors as repetition, degree of involvement and intelligence of the listener, the prestige and trustworthiness of the source, the interest and motivation of the listener. Face to face communications are more flexible and effective in inducing action. Movies and radio often influence clothes styles and choice of foodstuffs, but generally they serve by creating favorable background conditions for more direct communication later.

Research studies of large social groups are rare, but one study of a whole city indicates the possibilities of such research. Cauter and Downham studied the city of Derby, England, under the sponsorship of the Reader's Digest Association Ltd. in 1953. A team of social scientists and interviewers descended on this city of 200,000 to determine the extent to which various channels of communication are used by a representative sample of residents. Through questionnaires and interviews they sought to discover certain basic facts and patterns of communication, the extent to which people take part in activities available in

the city, and how they may be influenced in the formation of their ideas and opinions by them. They discovered that 75% to 100% of the people could be reached at some time via either church, cinema, books, magazines, radio and newspapers. The most frequent contacts were by radio (70%), newspaper (40%), and the pub (30%).

Researchers found that most of the communication activities involved only a limited segment of the population. With the exception of radio-listening, newspapers, and magazines, a substantial block of people engaged in little or no organized social or intellectual activity. In determining exposure to or participation in a variety of activities, education was found to be the most important factor, followed by sex and age. Men consistently scored higher than women, and activity was found to decline with age, especially over 55. The very active and very inactive groups could be predicted largely on the basis of the degree of education. People of higher social status and more education, especially professionals and administrators, tended to have higher scores. From 80-90% of the total activity in the city was accounted for by only 20% of the people. Although radio listening and newspaper reading were almost universal, the research showed that certain people are comparatively easy to reach because they are accessible through a variety of channels and are constantly exposed to a fresh flood of ideas. At the other extreme are those who are difficult to reach through the normal channels of communication.[1]

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[1] T. Cauter and J. S. Downham, The Communication of Ideas, A Study of Contemporary Influences on Urban Life, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1954).

By far the most active field of communication study in the last ten years has been the study of small experimental groups. The study of factors influencing communication form a large portion of the experimental literature in the field of group dynamics. Since the death of Kurt Lewin in 1947 studies of processes in small groups have multiplied rapidly, largely from the University of Michigan and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. These experiments have considerable sophistication in both methodology and theory. Taken as a whole these studies illustrate how field studies can lead to controlled laboratory experiments and how successive experiments can be designed to test a set of interrelated hypotheses to give systematic information. They comprise a remarkable corpus coming so suddenly in a short period of time, a truly remarkable movement in social science. Many of the experiments were motivated by wartime needs and were financed by the Office of Naval Research. The following problems have been subject to investigation: the transmission of rumor and information within groups, restraints against communication in hierarchies, the advantage of feedback opportunities in performance, and the exerting of influence through communication. Among the independent variables have been the pressure toward uniformity, personal attraction to other members in the group, task motivation, group prestige, individual deviance or conformity with respect to group norms, homogeneity or heterogeneity of perceived group composition, relevance of issues to the purpose of the group, high or low status in a hierarchy and perceived potential mobility in status. Other studies have been made of the role of communication in the reduc-

tion of hostility, the effect of communication patterns upon performance and morale, and the tendency to communicate more with the person opposite than adjoining in circle groups. Nearly all of these studies have originated since 1950, and almost all were performed on laboratory, rather than real life groups. Most of them are available in two collections of papers edited by Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin Zander,[1] and by Hare, Borgatta and Bales.[2]

A fourth class of research involves the study of actual groups and organizations. Psychologists have been slow to extend their experiments beyond the individual or the small laboratory group to ongoing social structures. Information on communication patterns and problems is scarce, and programs of research have to be designed broadly to advance understanding and lay the foundations for future research.

Eugene Jacobson and Stanley E. Seashore undertook the study of a government agency responsible for selecting research projects.[3] The method of data gathering was that of the intensive open-end interview, but embedded in the interview procedure were a series of questionnaire forms designed to get detailed, intensive coverage of certain critical content areas.

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[1]Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin Zander (ed.) Group Dynamics, (Evanston: Illinois, Row, Peterson & Co., 1953).

[2]Paul Hare, Edgar Borgatta, and R. Bales (ed.) Small Groups: Studies in Social Interaction, (New York; Alfred Knopf, 1955).

[3]Eugene Jacobson and Stanley E. Seashore, "Communication Practices in Complex Organisations," Journal of Social Issues, No. 3, Vol. 7, 1951.

Members of the organization were asked to write the names of those he works with most closely. These were status classified as (1) above, (2) below, or (3) same level. Measures were obtained showing the frequency of contact, the subject matter (routine, technical, internal, or external policy or general information), and the importance of the contact (utmost, great, some, little, none). There were some 2400 contacts from 204 persons within the organization. The investigators sought to identify subgroups within the organization, liaison people, the perceived status hierarchy, and the power figures.

A similar study of a main plant of a meat packing company was made by William H. Keown, in a deliberate effort to bring communication research out of the laboratory and into the complexity of real life situations.[1] It is a study of communications orginating with union and management officers in a factory employing more than 2,000 workers, with the objective of sighting factors which impede or expedite the flow of information. The communication system of each organization was studied separately, (1) to discover the leaders' policies with respect to sharing information with the rank and file, (2) to ascertain the subject matter of communication, (3) to trace the channels used, and (4) to obtain from the participants at each organizational level their appraisal of the system's effectiveness. Methods used by Keown included content analysis of written documents and policy statements, interviews with the communicators, and a questionnaire-survey of employees.

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[1]William H. Keown, Some Dimensions of Company-Union Downward Communication, University of Wisconsin School of Commerce, 1955.

Although it was the company's written policy to inform employees about the company and its operations three-quarters of the management were not aware of it, and most of the union representatives thought that officials "want to keep most things secret." Plant foremen talked with about 50% of the employees once a day, but with 20% less than once a week. About 28% of the employees said it was useless to ask a foreman a question. Employees ranked printed materials high as a source of information, but 50% did not know specific information recently written, and none of the written communications analyzed could be read with ease by 60% of the employees. When asked to suggest improvements, union and plant leaders both asked for more timely information and more face-to-face meetings as the principal mode of communication. As to the subject matter, a large majority of persons desired more information of all kinds from the company. The most pressing need voiced by supervisors and foremen alike was for personal information about their job, their adequacy in relation to it, their future, and their salary.

On the union side of the picture, in spite of an expressed policy of the union to share all information on union activities, 25% of the members questioned the willingness of union leaders to share. Employees were just as anxious to receive more information of all kinds on union activities as they were of plant activities. In general the union stewards were found to be in closer touch and have more practical interests and solutions to problems than the union executives. The union steward was a much more important source of information than the foreman, the foreman's role being made difficult because he did not receive adequate

information from higher management.

A third study of a real organization was carried out by Tom Burns in a British engineering factory using a "self-recording technique."[1] This study is the most interesting from a standpoint of the present research since by coincidence there are many parallels in methodology and design. Motivated to find out how executives spend their time and with whom they communicate, Burns asked four executives in a department of 128 people to use a "schedule of interaction" including ten categories of content (sales, personnel, costs, new research, personal, etc. divided into "old," "present," or "new" business) and several categories of function such as obtaining, giving, systematizing, recording information and explaining. They also recorded information as to the time, medium, location, and direction of communication. The four participants jotted down their activities during the day and mailed them to the experimenter each night. The study ran for five weeks (25 days), after which the data were transferred to punch cards.

The findings; the engineers averaged 34 episodes of communication per day within a range of 25 - 40, spent 80% of their time in conversation, usually discussed several topics, not just one.

This executive group communicated with less than 1/10 of the total factory population, spoke 25% of the time to each other. They overestimated the time spent on production and underestimated their absorption in human relations problems. Their communication was restricted in range,

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[1] Tom Burns, "The Directions of Activity and Communication in a Departmental Executive Group", Human Relations, VII (February, 1954), 73-97.

no man seeing more than 1/3 of the departmental personnel, and 1/2 of the personnel having no contact with any of the four executives in the five weeks of the study. Information was found to pass up and down in the structure but more often through contacts between status circuits than along administrative lines. The executives gave as much time to staff as to line relationships. A marked tendency to initiate communication downward rather than upward underscored the strong influence of status. Among those on the same status level communication passed freely.

The Rise of Research On the Ministry

As important as it would seem to be to evaluate the progress of the minister in his complex role of leader in the Christian community, charged as he is with responsibilities of a critical nature in dimensions extending from the human to the divine, research has nevertheless been neglected. Although there are plenty of books of advice for the clergyman based upon personal opinion and experience, there are very few which offer a body of systematic information gathered by scientific methods. There are many debates but few facts. Few researches have been projected in such a way as to yield information which is measurable, reliable, and significant for the parish minister. With the rise of social psychology since 1908, however, new and useful methods have become available, including the questionnaire, interview, interaction records, opinion poll, and content-analysis. In a few rare studies some of the methods of social science have been used to contribute to an understanding of the Church and

ministry. The following studies are an illustration of this recent trend.

Hugh Hartshorne and Milton Froyd were commissioned in 1944 to make a survey of theological education in the Northern Baptist Convention. One of the ten objectives of this survey related to the practical situation of the parish minister: "What are and should be the needs, problems, and activities of pastors?" [1]

A representative group of alumni from nine seminaries associated with the Northern Baptist Convention were sent questionnaires requesting information about their ideas and activities. The population included city and rural ministers, graduates of different types of seminaries, and men of all ages. On the side of theory, there was a very large agreement among all men upon certain traditional responsibilities of the Church for public worship, educational and evangelistic outreach, and provision for fellowship and service within the Church. They also agreed upon certain essential ministerial tasks involved in these church responsibilities, such as, "bringing persons to Christ and to a personal commitment to the will of God as disclosed in Christ", "getting people to support the world mission of the church", and "helping parents to build Christian homes and provide Christian nurture for their children."

In ranking these tasks in order of importance 96% agreed upon "bringing persons to Christ and personal commitment" as the top task of the ministry. Second, with 74% agreed, was "helping parents build

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[1] Hugh Hartshorne and Milton C. Froyd, Theological Education in the Northern Baptist Convention. A Survey, (Philadelphia, Judson Press, 1945, for the Board of Education of the Northern Baptist Convention), pp. 21-94.

Christian homes, and third, with 65% agreeing, was "education in beliefs and practices." The theological faculties polled were sharply divided between a traditional and a functional definition of the pastor's work. Responses from churches which were polled on the specification of pastoral duties and qualities were ambivalent in expressing an overwhelming desire to have ministers who would "take part in activities for community welfare and social betterment," and an equally overwhelming emphasis upon needs strictly within the church.[1]

In checking the actual work of the minister they asked for a list of his activities, and an accounting of time spent for seven days. Here the gap between theory and practice opened while the differences in the performance of different types of alumni narrowed. Preaching was found to be the most important activity in support of the six most agreed upon objectives, with personal counseling and pastoral calling a close second, and teaching functions, third. Expenditures of time were figured from 152 completed blanks indicating a work week of 58 hours broken down roughly into the following categories: preparation and study, 18 hours, administrative, 13 hours, pastoral, 11 hours, preaching, 8 hours, teaching, 4 hours, and community service, 3 hours. The authors reported an impression that the ministers go "from place to place at someone else's bidding rather than of planning [illegible] time and engaging in activities in accordance with some policy or strategy."[2] Likewise they observe a separation of the minister from the larger community and from the life of the people.

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[1]Ibid. p. 52.

[2]Ibid. p. 77.

Ninety-five percent of the ministers report doing pastoral calling, but only 25% call in the hospital.

In responding to a question about their problems in parish work the ministers indicated no overwhelming sense of difficulty. Two types of problems most frequently mentioned related to spiritual and pastoral work; 41% were concerned about these. Other matters under apparently satisfactory control were: missions, record keeping, stewardship, sermon preparation, denominational and ecumenical matters!

Murray H. Leiffer conducted an opinion poll among Methodists in 1947 to discover what laymen think about ministerial behavior and practice.[1] By means of a questionnaire sent to district lay leaders, and a representative group of women and youth, he received ratings on the desirability or undesirability of certain behavior. He checked such areas as preaching, pastoral, administrative, and community work, attitudes toward his profession and social issues, personal qualities and others. This select Methodist group were in favor of strong optimistic preaching, expected their ministers to take initiative on Christian issues, spend adequate time in study, conduct services punctually and with dignity, preach distinctly and without annoying mannerisms, mix easily with all ages and furnish challenging leadership to men especially; to be tolerant and democratic in conducting church business, cooperative in ecumenical affairs, forceful in opposition to segregation and liquor traffic, and a model in personal attire, hygiene, and family life![2]

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[1]Murray H. Leiffer, The Layman Looks at the Minister, (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947).

[2]Ibid. pp. 153-160.

With a view to improving their service to the ministry and the church, one hundred theological schools under the leadership of the American Association of Theological Schools set out in 1955 to study theological education in the United States and Canada. With a grant of $65,000 from the Carnegie Corporation, and Professor H. Richard Niebuhr as Director, a large effort has been made to assess the needs of the ministry and the weaknesses of theological education today. The greatest emphasis was placed upon the curricula of the schools, but some contributions were also made to the understanding of the parish. Thirty representative pastors were interviewed and one hundred pastors wrote letters on the purpose, limitations, opportunities, and hazards of the Protestant ministry. The editors describe their first report as a whole as "a somewhat personal effort to clarify and organize ideas about the Church, ministry and theological education that seem to be 'in the air' or that seem to be developing in 'the climate of opinion'." [1] The report therefore is subjective though not without benefit of certain general measures of the actual situation. Fully cognizant of the confusion in the church and seminary with regard to the minister's function, Niebuhr asserts that unspectacular processes of reconstruction have been at work to shape a new concept of the ministry in our time, the concept of the "pastoral director." The focal point in the church building today is the office from which the minister directs the activities of the church,

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[1] H. Richard Niebuhr, The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry; Reflections on the Aims of Theological Education, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. xiii.

where he also studies and does some of his pastoral counseling. Pastoral directors carry on all the traditional functions of the ministry but there is arrangement of priorities around the central ambition to bring into existence a true family of God, a fellowship of service with a sense of world mission, drawing upon the resources of the larger community and seeking the increase among men of the love of God and neighbor. The "Church is becoming the minister and its 'minister' is its servant, directing it in its service."[1] He is "charged with the responsibility and given the authority to hold in balance, to invigorate and to maintain communication among a host of activities and their responsible leaders, all directed toward a common end." [2]

The most comprehensive and exclusive research into the function of the Protestant parish minister has been conducted by Dr. Samuel W. Blizzard, now professor of Christianity and Society at Princeton Theological Seminary. Under a $40,000 grant from the Russell Sage Foundation in 1954, Blizzard has made a thorough survey of the predicament of the parish minister today. This research is not yet published.

Two groups of informants form the population of his study, the graduates of five theological seminaries in three year intervals between 1930 and 1951 who are still in the parish, and a group selected by leaders of twenty-two denominations representing a spread in age, geography, size of church, and type of ministry. Six hundred ninety informants

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[1]Ibid. p. 83.

[2]Ibid. pp. 90-91.

answered a questionnaire in which they were asked to evaluate six practitioner roles (administrator, organizer, pastor, priest, preacher and teacher) from three perspectives: importance, effectiveness, and enjoyment. In addition 480 of these respondents cooperated in filling out a "daily diary" in which they were asked what they had done yesterday, where, and with whom? These diaries were marked off in half-hour intervals to be filled in with the activities in which they had actually engaged the previous day. These activities were then content-analyzed using the six practitioner roles, to determine the relationship of the normative and the performance order of the roles. By use of these methods on a large interdenominational sample, Blizzard has given us the first comprehensive account of the function and dilemma of the modern parish minister.

In spite of their individual opinions, all of the men in this study wound up doing substantially the same thing, indicating how largely the roles of the minister are defined by the requests of parishioners, denominational programs, and the culture of the community. The functional demands of the parish were found in one order, while the pastor's conception of the importance of these roles and his effectiveness in them, were in another. Pastors spent most time in roles they considered least important. They spent approximately 40% of their ten hour working day as administrators, about 25% as pastors. Preaching and priestly duties took up almost 20%, organizing took 10%, and teaching the least, 5%. Stenographic tasks consumed more time per day than sermon preparation.

Blizzard concludes:

> The roles a minister performs in present day American society are basically equivocal. On the one hand, the church has a traditional set of norms by which he is expected to be guided. On the other hand, the parishioner has a set of functional expectations by which the minister's professional service is judged. This is the minister's dilemma. He faces basic ambiguities in performing the practitioner roles.[1]

On the basis of his own experience mainly, but with the support of Blizzard's findings on role conflict, another Pastor, the Reverend Wesley Shrader of Yale Divinity School has claimed that the number one problem of American clergymen is their own mental health. Writing on "Why Ministers Are Breaking Down" in LIFE magazine, Mr. Shrader warned that there was an alarming increase of nervous disorders among the clergy. Where does the explanation lie?

> It lies principally in the fact that the minister's role, as conceived by the members of church congregations, has become impossible. It is a role that no individual human being, not even one of the Twelve Apostles, could adequately fill. So long as lay people keep demanding more of their ministers than they can deliver, ministers are going to continue to break down regardless of their mental and emotional health at the beginning of their pastorates.[2]

Shrader notes the greatest incidence of breakdowns among the conscientious hard workers who are determined to fulfill all their obligations. They try but fail. Again they try and fail. Frustration, fear of failure, and finally guilt, this is the destructive cycle which leads

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[1]Samuel W. Blizzard, "The Minister's Dilemma," The Christian Century, April 25, 1956, p. 509.

[2]Wesley Shrader, "Why Ministers Are Breaking Down," LIFE, August 20, 1956.

to breakdown.

Professor Niebuhr in his historical survey refers to the ministry as "the perplexed profession," observing that neither the ministers nor the schools which nurture them are guided today by a clear-cut, generally accepted conception of the office of the ministry. Niebuhr writes:

> The evidence that perplexity and vagueness continue to afflict thought about the ministry is to be found today in the theological schools and among the ministers themselves. Some schools and some pastors are highly conscious of the problem; others are in a more difficult state because they have not realized the source of their perplexities.[1]

Articles in current periodicals and professional journals reflect these perplexities continually. Writing in the Christian Century, a leading pastor, Roy A. Burkhart, testifies to the atmosphere of failure and defeat which he sees:

> ...I know many preachers who live in the tyranny of defeat and failure, who center in what they are not and what they cannot do, rather than in being receptive to the infinite grace and power of God. This is a major tragedy. It puts a blight on the church...Moreover, it means that many ministers are so overwhelmed with their insufficiency that they burn out their energies trying to run institutions instead of ministering to people.[2]

In an article entitled "Preaching on the Edge of Desperation" an outstanding Presbyterian pastor outlines the same dilemma of tension:

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[1]H. Richard Niebuhr, The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry (New York: Harper Brothers, 1956), pp. 48-53.

[2]Roy A. Burkhart, "Toward A Healthy Theology," The Christian Century, December 19, 1956.

> Today's busy minister is caught in an intense tug of war. He is stretched wire-taut. Forces at one end pull him into perpetual activity. He is a slave to the telephone, office appointments, committee meetings, workshop conferences, speaking engagements, and such parish obligations as weddings, funerals and church-night affairs. At the other end, often losing the battle, but retaining undeniable attractions, are his ideals for study, meditation, and pulpit work...[1]

Along with these critical articles, one can read an equal number of articles in rebuttal. The interchange has been stimulating and has floated the question of the minister's job to the level of controversy, but the controversy is inconclusive for lack of scientific information. Blizzard's study stands almost alone to illuminate with facts the darkness which surrounds parish labors. Yet this one study cannot answer all the questions. Many important and elementary facts are still unknown, which could contribute mightily to the debates that are raging, and as well to the formulations of this new role of Pastoral Director which may be emerging. Is there reason to believe we are cracking up? Are we emerging or submerging? Are ministers drawn "wire taut" or are they relatively satisfied with their functions in the church? Has the work of the modern pastor become more personal or less personal? Are they serving an inclusive or exclusive community? How much has the ministry actually changed in recent times? Have pastors "changed the subject" or are they using new words and relationships to communicate historic meanings? With what strategies of communication

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[1] Cary N. Weisiger, "Preaching on the Edge of Desperation," Christianity Today, December 10, 1956.

should the church face a period of growth and popularity? These questions are left unanswered. To find answers we should turn to research.

The Scope of the Present Research

With a conviction about the significance of the role of the Protestant parish minister and the desire to increase his potential value to Church and community, this research utilizes new concepts of communication and methods of social psychology to discover basic facts about the work of the minister today. It is a study in real life based upon the activities of the parish ministers of Lynn, Massachusetts. The material under study is the material of communication as it took place on one weekday and one Sunday in the life of fifty ministers.

Each single communication event has been recorded so as to reveal important information about the direction, context, subject matter and means of communication and the types of people involved. In certain cases additional facts were gathered on ingroup and outgroup status together with measures of possible motivating factors in operation.

Supplementary information from a three-hour personal interview with each minister amplifies the primary data and provides more reliable knowledge of communication in group situations. It also greatly extends the base of the survey to include a broad range of facts relevant to communication. An inventory is made of the church's equipment for communication, the minister's ability to operate communication equipment,

secretarial and staff assistance, the arrangement of responsibilities for certain regular communication tasks, and the use of mass media through the Church year. Problems and policies surrounding the key functions as administrator, organizer, pastor, priest, preacher, and teacher are also surveyed. Perhaps the most important contribution of the interview is the reporting of the minister's personal feelings, values, and strivings with regard to his vocation.

The general aim of this detailed research is to make available some of the fundamental facts of pastoral relationship and vocation, to discover the actual dimensions of possible communication problems, and to assess the importance of these problems to the ministry and the Church.

Four themes will dominate the presentation of research findings, themes which are really four major dimensions of communication. These are: (1) the contents of communication, (2) means of communication, (3) channels of communication, referring to the persons connected, and (4) the motives of communication. These four general headings can be translated into the simple questions what, how, who and why? The specific questions in each of these areas to be treated in this research are spelled out in the following paragraphs.

First, <u>what</u> is it that the minister has to say? What matters engage his attention, absorb his time, dominate the conversations? For an answer to these questions we shall adapt the major roles used by Dr. Samuel Blizzard in his important recent research, to permit comparison of data from these two studies. Our content-analysis will answer such questions as: How often does the minister talk about classroom or sermon material?

Do administrative and organizational matters dominate the minister's conversation or overshadow his pastoral interests? Into what functional categories might the subject matter fall: counsel and advice, spiritual guidance, information passing, instruction, or something else?

Second, <u>how</u>? How does the pastor hold his people in communication today? By what means does he convey messages and conduct business? Is he able to employ modern means of communication for the enrichment and extension of the Christian community? Are they adaptable to his work or do they create further problems for him? How often does he employ the telephone, a personal letter, newspaper publicity, or printed material he has edited? What is the context of reception? Are parishioners in classes, small groups, large audiences, or do they meet him one by one? How much of his communication is deliberate consultation, visitation, counseling, and how much is unplanned "passing conversation"?

Third, <u>to whom</u> does the minister talk? Does he talk to everyone? Are those who approach him strangers, new prospects, community leaders, social friends, or politicians? How often are they Roman Catholic or Jewish? If they are within the fold of the church, are they the leaders, committee workers, worshippers? Do females outnumber males? Are children, youth, and aged all represented? What is the marital status of persons in touch with the minister; what are their occupations? Is the minister mostly in touch with other professional persons and business managers, or more frequently with sales and clerical workers? How frequently do we find him talking to craftsmen and foremen, operatives, service workers or laborers? How many are students, housewives, or

retired persons?

Finally, why do ministers talk to people? What do ministers conceive to be the motives of others who call upon them? Just how frequently does a minister engage in conversation to give rather than to get something? How well does he like the people he talks with? Does he need help from them in his personal work, or does the church stand in frequent need of services which they render? How often does the pressure of time or circumstance enter as a motivating factor in communication? Are patterns of communication formed along lines of age or marital status? Do ministers of all ages communicate with persons in various age brackets in the same way or is their inhibition and bias in selection? All these questions and others will be considered in this research report.

Communication problems are the main focus of this study, but because these problems will be abstracted from real-life communication data, other information can be gathered from the same source. For this reason, the study of communication also yields information about the communicator, his function and his life. The author hopes that the analysis of the pastor's actual communications will make a small contribution to the understanding of the life and work of the parish minister, a subject too often bathed in obscurity and stereotype by laymen and strangers alike. A parish minister has many acquaintances but few of them, even in his own parish, have a deep understanding of his work. Even persons close to the minister sometimes do not know the emotional burdens, details, or deep satisfactions of his vocation. Not fully realizing what he does between Sundays, Church people can be superficial in

judging his success, adjusting his workload, or really accepting his failure to be effective at particular points.

In the larger community the minister may be better understood among those who also bear responsibilities as educators, executives, civic leaders, or public servants. But even here the minister is in a class somewhat by himself, subject to stereotype, and with a confessional veil hanging before him. He deals with secrets and with mysteries. He commits himself to lead a group which seems to depend more upon faith than proof, and where emotional experiences and feelings have more status than plain facts or cold reasoning. What <u>does</u> the minister think? What <u>does</u> he do? Psychologists and psychiatrists may be somewhat surprised at his invasion into counseling, and to discover that he is often involved in people's problems by invitation, knows their maladjustments (sins), and aids them in achieving relief from mental suffering. It is almost by accident that other professional workers in the community stumble upon the parish minister and see him in operation at one point or another, but even these are fleeting glimpses of a man with an unusual occupation. Who sees the whole? Ministers have no "job description" to explain their work. Yet, through such a study which comes as close to daily life as this it may be possible for laymen and colleagues alike to know more about the Reverend Mr. Jones and the world in which he lives.

The study of pastoral communication has vast possibilities. It is an area of research which deserves repeated effort reflecting a variety of interests and approaches. The present study is a general

survey of what is going on at the moment. It dips in deeper at certain points to check controversial theories, suggest new postulates, and discover areas which may be fruitful for future research, but it is still only a survey, a first look. It is certain not to be the last scientific word spoken on communication problems in the parish ministry, but it may well be the first.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The present research is a combination of action research and field survey. Its foundation is the real-life communication activities of Protestant ministers recorded at the moment of action by means of a self-recording technique; its superstructure is fashioned with survey material gathered by means of a highly structured personal interview.

The Self-Recording Technique

The primary data was gathered by means of a printed book of 8½ x 11 inch printed sheets, wire-bound at the top to permit rapid flipping over of pages and to keep the working sheet always ready at the top. Each sheet was exactly the same, and provided space for the information which was to be supplied for every event of communication during the period of the study. The sheets were designed so that only numbers or check marks were necessary to record the information, with the exception of the task of writing down a few words to designate the separate topics of conversation. The information form for each event therefore was simple enough to be filled out in a few seconds of time and did not significantly interfere with the day's activities. Books composed of one hundred communication record sheets each were provided each minister, and an additional book when needed. After each event was recorded the page was flipped over to permit recording of the next. Each minister was personally instructed and trained in the use of the report book. A specimen page is

included in the Appendix.

Information gathered on these primary data sheets included the direction of the communication (incoming or outgoing), the time begun and finished, the frequency of incompleted calls (no answer or line busy, not home, etc.), the means of communication (26 possibilities including telephone, letter, home visit, counseling, passing conversation, committee meeting, radio), the topics of conversation, the topic known or thought to be the originating topic, the presence of criticism directed toward the minister, the sex, marital status, and age of the communicants in a range of decades, the use of prayer or sacraments, and the number of persons addressed.

Structured Interview

Shortly after the completion of the reports an extensive personal interview was held with each minister. This structured interview generally took three hours and included tasks of (1) checking the communication records to assure proper handling and completeness of detail, (2) gathering further psychological and sociometric data on the personal type communications in the weekday sample, (3) surveying completely the minister's communication activity in formal group situations, and (4) asking a series of 115 questions bearing on communication practices, policies, and problems.

The supplementary study of personal communications in the weekday sample yielded specific information on occupation, status inside the church (leader, worker, frequency of worship attendance, staff) and status outside the church (community leader, religious affiliation, new

prospect, social friend, politician, or stranger). A judgement was made as to whether the person who originated the call was trying to give or to get something, with a choice of five possibilities, counsel and advice, information, instructions, spiritual guidance, or some other service. This item of the supplementary sheet is thus a type of content analysis as well as a rough motive indicator. Finally a rating was made on four psychological and sociometric factors in answer to the following questions: "How well do you like the person?", "How often do you need him?", "How often does the Church need him?", and "How pressing was the call at the time?"

In surveying the extent of communication activity in group situations each minister was asked to write down in one column the names of the committees he attends regularly, and in another, the names of the groups he attends regularly. By this was meant all committees and organizations inside and outside of the church; "regular" was interpreted as any meeting attended at least weekly, monthly, or quarterly. Annual meetings were not considered regular. Ministers were aided in the process of recall by questions about their possible affiliations. When the lists had been made code letters were added to indicate the minister's degree of responsibility and involvement in them. Specifically they were asked which groups tied them down with a regular duty, which depended heavily on them, and in which they had to lead or preside. Further, the ministers indicated which groups would run well without them, which required services which only a pastor could give, which were outside the local church, and finally, the

total time occupied by these activities each month. A careful estimate was made of the time cost of these groups through systematic consideration of how long the group met, how often it met, and what extra demands it made on the minister's time, all averaged by the interviewer to give a monthly estimate.

The interview questions proper were organized in several categories: (1) vital statistics describing the minister and Church, (2) the degree of exposure to mass media of communication, (3) a series of questions bearing on each of the practitioner roles and role satisfaction in general, (4) potential problems of communication, and (5) the pastor's personal preferences and values. Under the rubric of vital statistics such questions were asked as the age, years of education, years of tenure, salary, skills of typing and mimeographing, size of church in membership, and secretarial and staff assistance. A brief survey of exposure to mass media of communication was concerned with habits of book and newspaper reading, listening to religious radio and religious television. For specific information surrounding the practitioner roles, questions were asked about stenographic and office facilities, responsibilities for record-keeping, publicity, mass media used by the Church, a check list of constant administration problems, availability of the minister at different times of day, habits of sermon preparation, priestly responsibilities, the frequency of pastoral calling and counseling, hospital visitation, referral to other experts in the community, teaching responsibilities through the year, role-strain and role-strivings, barriers of communication, preferences for certain media, etc. Nine

questions were concentrated on the topic of the minister's Sunday including his feeling about it and preparation for it. The interview concluded with a few questions on crucial handicaps and opportunities of communication in the parish today. The complete list of interview questions is reprinted in the Appendix.

The Sample and Sampling Procedures

The setting for this study is in a greater urban area embracing 130,000 persons. The key city, a distinctly urban industrial and shopping center for the surrounding suburbs is the city of Lynn, Massachusetts, a city of 100,000 population. Close lying towns involved in the study are Nahant, Swampscott, Marblehead, Saugus, and Lynnfield, all primarily residential in character housing those who commute either to Lynn, or to Boston, which lies just 15 miles away.

The sample of the professional Protestant and Orthodox parish ministry in the city of Lynn was virtually complete, involving 38 men. Twelve men and women represent the ministry of the suburban towns surrounding the city, and constitute a complete ministerial sample of Saugus, Nahant, and Swampscott. Four more suburban ministers were chosen from Lynnfield and Marblehead to make an even fifty ministers. Lay ministers were not included, nor were assistants, except in the case of the Greek Orthodox ministry, where a language barrier intervened. Twenty-one denominational varieties were represented as follows: Methodist, African Methodist, Congregational, Zion Baptist, Conservative and Liberal Baptist churches, Episcopal, Augustana and Missouri Synod Lutheran, Disciples of Christ, Nazarene, Universalist, Assembly of God Pentacostal, Evangelical

Mission Covenant, Greek Orthodox, Open Bible Standard, Polish National Catholic, Presbyterian, Salvation Army, Society of Friends, and Unitarian, in order of numbers. A complete list is found in the Appendix.

In degree of professional training, only four men had four years of college or under. Twenty-five men, or 50% had more than seven years of training beyond high school. The average years of education for the whole group was eight years beyond high school. They ranged in age from 25 to 67, the average age being 44. Six were graduate students living and working in the parish but spending some time each week commuting to school in Boston. Days were assigned to these men when they would be at work in the parish.

In length of tenure more than half of the men had served their present churches for four years or less. Five had served for less than one year in their present location, five had served for more than 13 years. The length of time in the ministry ranged from one to forty-five years, with an average of 17 years. The size of the churches in membership ranged from 24 to 5,000 with an average membership among the fifty churches of 524 members.

Ministers participated in the study for two days each, one weekday and one Sunday. Days were not selected but assigned in rough alphabetical order to produce a balanced sample of six weekdays and a variety of six Sundays. The two days were within the same week. The study as a whole was projected over a three month period to avoid excessive bias.

Two weeks were chosen from the months of November and December of 1956 and January of 1957. One special Church day was included, Thanksgiving. Weeks were chosen within the month to achieve the best balance of first, second, third, and fourth Sundays of the month.

The Sunday Observer

The faithful recording of the primary data on Sunday was recognized to be a special difficulty in view of the minister's heavy load of communication on that day. To control this temporary overload an observation system was developed utilizing one member of each church who was recommended by the minister and trained by the researcher. This person was assigned to observe the minister from the time of his arrival on Sunday morning to the time of his departure, and to record in a small notebook the names of those who were engaged in actual conversation with the minister. In addition to this recording of names to represent conversations which had been held, the observer kept a tally of brief contacts such as handshakes and greetings to reveal the total volume of interaction on Sunday morning. These records from the observer were used by the minister later in the day to facilitate recall as he made separate reports in the book.

Data Processing Operations

Once gathered, the data have been processed in a variety of ways. Generally, we have followed simple accounting processes to arrive at expressions of percentage, range, and average. The interview data were tabulated manually and the primary data electronically.

Some of the interview data, though interesting, is not germane to the discussion and is not included in the dissertation. The primary data, however, is important in almost every detail. Altogether some 2640 person to person communication events were recorded, each event being measured along 13 parameters. To facilitate the accounting and tabulating of this mass of information, IBM cards were punched for each single communication event, and tabulated electronically. Up to fifty-four pieces of information were punched onto a single card representing all of the items of the primary data sheet and the supplementary form for personal weekday communications, plus certain theoretical and identification material. To permit the punching of the cards all source information was converted into code numbers, and the original documents marked for punching. Cards were punched and verified in the usual way and tabulated on IBM sorting and tabulating machines by the Service Bureau Corporation, a subsidiary of IBM, in the New Haven branch office. By card counting, master controlling, and some cross sorting, twenty statistical reports were issued as ordered by the researcher.

In handling the original data, one major procedural change was instituted in the interest of reliability. Of the twenty-six possible means of communications, only the personal communications were treated electronically. Mass and group types of communication were segregated for separate treatment. This deserves special comment. It was the purpose of the study to record <u>all</u> of the communications which took place within the two day period of study, and instructions were

issued to that end. In retrospect, however it has seemed prudent to remove two types of reports: reports of conversation within the parsonage, and the reports of group communications.

Parsonage family communications were eliminated because it appeared that the ministers had not consistently recorded them, the number being so few that statistical reliability could hardly be attached to them.

Reports of group and committee activity were eliminated before card processing because the self-recording technique did not prove itself perfectly adapted to meaningful recording of group information. For example, group interaction is seldom clearly incoming or outgoing, information on group discussions could not be recorded at the time it took place, rendering accounts inaccurate. Age, sex, and marital status categories were not designed for a population of more than one.

An additional reason for eliminating the group communications is more important from the standpoint of reliability and design. Group and committee activities are not daily in the strict sense but tend to be either weekly or monthly. To make a reliable study of these communications, therefore, one needs a broader base than one weekday and one Sunday, perhaps a full week or as much as a full month. The few examples which are caught in our daily study are real but not fully representative. Fortunately however, the interview included a very detailed study of communications in group situations, yielding important estimates of frequency, time required, and degree of responsibility, among other things.

Comment upon group type communications will be based, therefore, upon these data, rather than upon the more limited sample of primary reports. Reports which were made of communication in informal groups, not subject to the bias of monthly schedule, are tabulated and summarized in Table 15.

The focus of this study is not the minister's year, or the minister's month, but the minister's week. Communication samples were drawn from all six weekdays to avoid bias. The assumption is that a balanced sample of weekdays will provide a realistic and reliable foundation for understanding the minister's week. Sundays are studied separately. The study is nomothetic rather than idiographic, results being meaningful for the group but not for the individual minister. It is assumed that a body of over 2600 communication events will be characteristic for the group as a whole, and very likely, of other groups of parish ministers as well. What one particular minister may have failed to do on an assigned day is made up in the record made by his colleagues. Between them they engage in every normal ministerial activity. Their communications are studied with the hope of discovering certain relationships, proportions, ranges, and limitations, rather than raw facts themselves, which,predictably, would vary from time to time, and from place to place.

Extended comment is needed to explain how the topics of conversation were classified. The relatively new method of content-analysis was used, whereby subject matter is classified in selected categories. A formal definition of content analysis given by Berelson describes it as "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication." [1] The categories

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[1]Bernard Berelson, Content Analysis in Communication Research (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1952), p. 18.

of content-analysis chosen for this study are those which were used by Dr. Samuel Blizzard in his recent survey. Dr. Blizzard has introduced a scheme of six major practitioner roles to describe what the minister is doing. The emphasis in the practitioner roles is on the doing, rather than upon the subject matter by itself. Stenographic work performed by the minister, for example, is usually considered as an "administrative" function, regardless of the cause being served through that stenographic service. Work with organizations, is "organizational" and does not clearly reflect the subject matter of the moment.

These practitioner roles reveal how the minister spends his time, and indicate the uses to which he is being put by the Church. Blizzard's study is extensive and of national scope, so that he is in a position to make authoritative comments on the function of the parish minister today.

From the particular standpoint of the subject matter with which the minister deals, however, the six-role scheme leaves something to be desired. There is first of all the weakness of categorizing activities by function rather than by strict content, which naturally results in information on function, but not on content. Secondly, the grouping of "pastoral" activities is too coarse to reflect some interesting facets of subject matter. Blizzard treats as "pastoral" nearly all personal interactions, casual conversation along with serious conversation, secular with sacred. It seems necessary then, if we are to elucidate the subject matter itself, to refine the pastoral category.

For the special purpose of the present study, then, Blizzard's major role scheme has been modified. The author has considered it an advantage to hold to Blizzard's roles as far as possible and to modify only for further elucidation of subject matter. In this regard, the two non-professional roles have been eliminated, and the pastoral role has been refined into three classes of subject matter. A further explanation of this refinement is appropriate.

Perhaps there is no more characteristic expectation on the part of laymen than that the minister should be found dealing with religious subjects. In sermons and classes the minister deals directly with religious ideas and norms, but what of his work during the week? Just how much of his business involves the explicit subject matter of religion is not yet known. It may be presumed necessary in a study of the minister's communications to answer such a question. For this reason, then, Blizzard's pastoral role has been broken into three content categories. One category will deal with matters expressing a personal concern and care for the happiness and well-being, illness and health of an individual. A second category will reflect the explicit use of religious ideas, ideals, and norms, philosophy of life, theology, and the application or interpretation of these ideas to life situations. Finally, a third category will collect examples of general conversation on matters outside the immediate sphere of ministerial practice, social conditions and developments, news, weather, and events of local and world interest, not discussed in a strictly religious or personal connection. The sum of

these three pastoral categories will include all that Blizzard treats as "pastoral", yet will shed more light on the actual content of these communications.

The content-analysis performed upon the topics of conversation collected in this research study, then, will be made according to the following scheme:

1. Administrative Matters. Within the local church: matters of budget, finance, canvassing, supervision of physical plant, ordering, purchasing and securing equipment and supplies, Official Board type-committee work, paperwork as representative of the congregation, correspondence, publicity, public relations, promotion, clerical and office work, parish bulletin, paper, newsletters, records, reports, building project tasks, expediting, conferring with architect, coordinating planning, bulletin board, gathering of loose ends of detail, taxi service, janitorial chores, repairs, errands and manual labor for church.

Outside the local church "administrative matters" includes all denominational and interdenominational conferences, committee work, functions, and obligations, summer camp matters, advising youth, liason between church and the colleges, benevolent cause promotion, ministerial association activities, cooperative and ecumenical causes and functions, union and community-wide services, radio broadcasts, etc.

2. Organizational Matters. Matters relating to the activities and work of committees and groups of all types and ages (other than

those in which the minister has direct executive responsibility) including social and religious events which they sponsor, choir, choir music, participating from time to time leading songs, recreation, presiding, or other tasks performed for these groups.

Also classed as organizational are those matters relating to committees and groups in the community in which the minister chooses to have a part, in public health, social and political action, social services, welfare, business, and civic groups, neighborhood clubs, etc.

3. Pastoral Matters - Personal Type. Interpersonal relations, informal fellowship with individuals, helping, working with, sharing life experiences, counseling of a personal nature, helping to settle disputes, misunderstandings, diplomatic missions, friendly outreach to new persons, referral to others for personal help, et cetera.

Pastoral matters, personal type, include all expressions of personal concern and care involving the happiness or well-being of a person, his illness or health, attitudes and aspirations.

4. Pastoral Matters - Religious Type. Matters involving the explicit use of religious norms and ideas, philosophy of life, theology, or the application and interpretation of these specific ideas in life situations.

5. Pastoral Matters - General Type. Matters of general interest outside the immediate sphere of ministerial practice, social conditions and developments, news, weather, and current events, which are not discussed in a strictly personal or religious connection.

6. Priestly Matters. Matters pertaining to worship and liturgy, prayer and ritual, administration of the sacraments and rites of the church, devotionals, et cetera.

7. Sermon Material. Relating to the delivery or contents of a sermon or speech, made by the minister.

8. Class or Discussion Material. Matters relating to the ideas developed in a teaching situation, or to the class experience in which the minister is the leader.

In characterizing each communication by noting the different areas of content, we have not taken account of duplication within one conversation. It does happen frequently that pastoral or administrative matters, for example, will come in two or even three separate times during the course of conversation, but it did not seem wise to report these duplications. To do this would involve an assumption of equality of subject topics and a uniformity of division by the fifty ministers. There is no way to prove that the ministers all divided their topics of conversation in the same way, or drew the line at the same points. Strict division of a real life conversation into discrete topics involves a certain arbitrariness, and may not necessarily yield more information. Lumping and grouping is a personal matter which effects the data at the source. It has seemed safer to report only the full range of topics for each conversation, noting the presence of each separate type of content, but not the predominance of one over the other. We have therefore considered the topics as "elements" of communication, and report

confidently that there was a pastoral element, a priestly element, an organizational element, et cetera. To describe a hierarchy of topics is beyond the scope of the present research. If the time taken by every separate topic were measured, one could report which topics of conversation took most time, and were dominant in that sense. But in the present study, ministers were asked only to indicate which of the topics listed was probably the originating topic. So far as introspection can provide it, we have a rough estimate of "content motivation," that is, which subject matter seemed to provoke communication. For the topics of a single conversation, what we are reporting is the simple presence of a range of topics, not the length of time taken by each, or the number of different matters raised within the limits of that one content area.

Evaluation Of Design

In evaluating the research design and methodology after its use we turn first to the self-recording technique. In general the printed books were a great success. They were welcomed by the ministers, aided in winning confidence, and structured the task of reporting communications admirably. The time taken was small, the work made simple by the writing of numbers and check marks. One hundred page books proved adequate except in two or three cases where an additional book had to be supplied. The technique was well adapted to the reporting of personal communications, but was not adapted to the reporting of group types. This weakness in the self-recording technique was compensated by the careful examination of group type communications made in the interview.

Since a self-recording device was used in this study, the minister who was being studied functioned as a type of participant observer. His recordings may be less than perfect, but for the purposes of this research, they seemed adequate. If the ministers failed to record absolutely all then the significance of the study is magnified rather than diminished; the situation is worse than indicated. The weakness of the participant observer was probably greatest on Sunday, when the communication load is maximum. To compensate for this, a second observer was employed, to aid in recall by the minister. As a matter of fact, however, there were a number of conversations on Sunday which every minister could not recall. Although the ministers were able to recall the substance of most of the conversations for which they were given a name and sequence as mnemonic cues, there were always a number of contacts for which no substance could be recalled. This may be taken not only as a weakness of method, but an expression of the problem of overload which the minister faces on Sunday morning; it may be convenient for parishoners to do their business with the minister on Sunday morning, but may not be the most efficient. Lay observers who followed the ministers around at a distance on Sunday morning were universally impressed by the volume of communication in which the pastor was engaged. Most of them were relieved when the morning was over, and admitted that they had not been fast enough to record all the contacts and names.

The interview presented the greatest trouble of overall design; it was maximum in length. Although the ministers were extremely cooperative and long-suffering, the intense interview of at least three hours

was a heavy burden. It was not lacking in interest, but took too long a stretch of time. All questions though interesting were not central and absolutely essential to the research goal. There was a certain evolution of the questions in the direction of clarity, and a swift improvement in the layout of some of the interview forms which did not prove adequate. The number of committees and groups, for example, turned out to be twice the number expected. The final draft of the primary data sheet did not need to be changed, probably owing to the fact that it was pre-tested by two ministers outside of the sample population.

The population of the study appears to be fairly characteristic and quite adequate for a pioneer study. Most churches today are located in urban-suburban neighborhoods, and the wide variety of churches involved in the study insures against any systematic bias of denomination. Generally speaking, there appears to be more variety among individual personalities than among denominations.

The projection of the study over a three month period - any three months - introduces a bias, but the bias does not seem serious. November, December, and January may be as typical of the church year as any other three months. It is not the heaviest time of year (Lent) or the lightest (summer). One special religious day was included, Thanksgiving, which is a modest holiday, not nearly so extravagant in its influence upon communication as Christmas or Easter. Holidays of this kind are typical of the church year and of the minister's professional life. We may assume that there are periods of the year, when

the communication load is much larger than that portrayed here, and our findings, from that standpoint, may be on the conservative side.

One bias which came as a surprise after the sampling had already been worked out and put into effect was the appearance of Every Member Canvass Sunday. All churches do not observe this day in the fall, but we ran onto a number who were. To correct for this, we sacrificed strict balance, and shifted as many ministers as possible to a different Sunday. For this reason, there is a slight loss of sample balance among the six Sundays. The number of ministers participating on each of the six Sundays is as follows: 10, 5, 8, 8, 9, 10.

It must be regarded unfortunate that we are not able to speak as confidently about communications in groups as we can about person-to-person communications, but we have explained our reasons for questioning the reliability of these data. It should be kept in mind that the information deriving from content-analysis, for example, represents only what took place in personal situations, and needs to be supplemented by reference to group communication. Other techniques are needed to study the complex interaction of groups, and to obtain a more detailed picture of how the minister participates.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONTENT AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

The findings of this study are projected on a background of ignorance and stereotype. Who knows what ministers talk about and how they keep in touch with the world?

Some ancient notions, now badly worn, hold that the minister lives in an ivory tower surrounded by shelves of books, where, in the security of unearthly calm and isolation he holds communion with the great minds of the past. Another stereotype hangs an old-fashioned frame around the minister's conversation creating false expectations of formality and embarrassment. If the minister is approached it may be with unnatural awe and hesitation. Many persons appear relieved to be set at ease and discover their fears unjustified, while others make the discovery that the minister does not eagerly wait to hear their excuses for not attending church or their apologies for using bad language.

Guilt and awkwardness in approaching the minister arise from basic misunderstanding and delay progress toward mature communication. In mature communication relationships may be built and breeches repaired, anxieties expressed and confusions crystallized. By communication a true community may be created and sustained, but not by superficial communication. True community lies beyond the barrier of stereotype whether held by the parishoner or the minister. Formal expectations and rigid patterns of interaction may need modification and replacement, but

change presupposes new information on both sides.

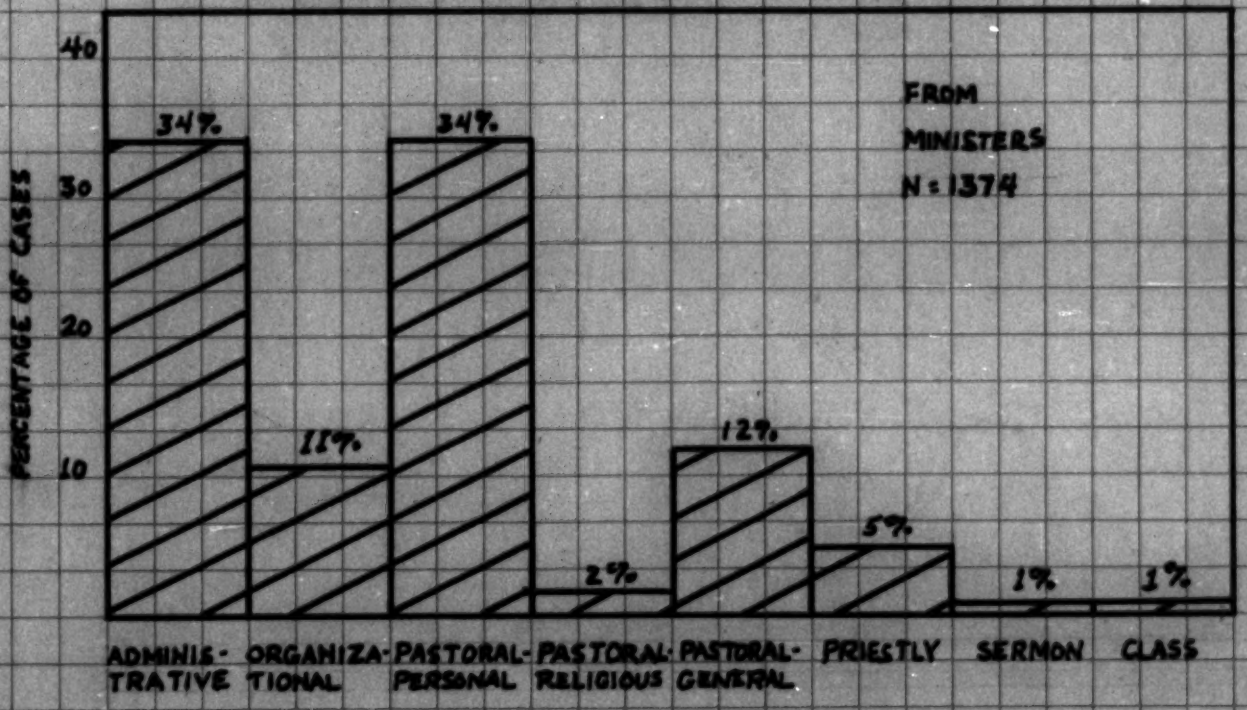
The Topics and Their Originators

Figures 1 and 2 direct attention to the major topics of conversation, since they treat only those topics judged to have been the original reason for communication. Figure 1 indicates which topics were responsible for the communications initiated by the ministers, and Figure 2 indicates which topics were responsible for communications initiated by others.

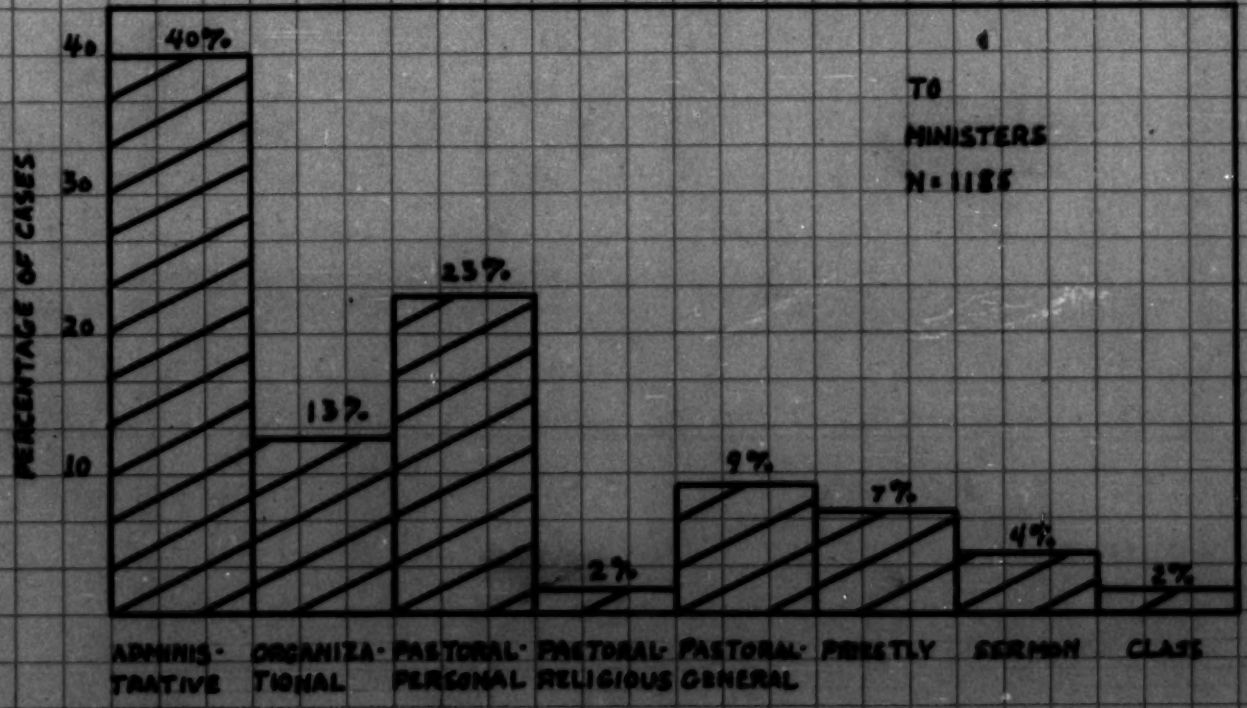
There is a major difference in the communications initiated by the ministers and by parishioners and others. The graph indicates clearly the different orientation of the ministers around personal considerations, matters of illness and health, happiness and well being, attitudes and aspirations. These are included in the personal category of pastoral communication. In the minister's conversation, such personal concerns provoke communication just as often as various administrative matters do, in an exact split. A small amount of pastoral conversation turns upon religious ideas and subject matter, and 12% more turns upon matters of general social interest, not specifically religious or personal. The 12% figure for general talk, and the 2% figure for religious talk may be regarded as surprisingly low. If conversation involving sermon material, worship and prayer, and classroom material is added to other religious subject matter, we still have a total of only 9%. When all three pastoral-type topics are considered together we have 48% of the communications originating out of personal concern, in contrast to 34% administrative, indicating a predominance of personal concerns in the minister's communications. If we group

FIGURES 1 AND 2

TOPICS WHICH ORIGINATED COMMUNICATIONS OF FIFTY PROTESTANT MINISTERS WITH 1374 PERSONS

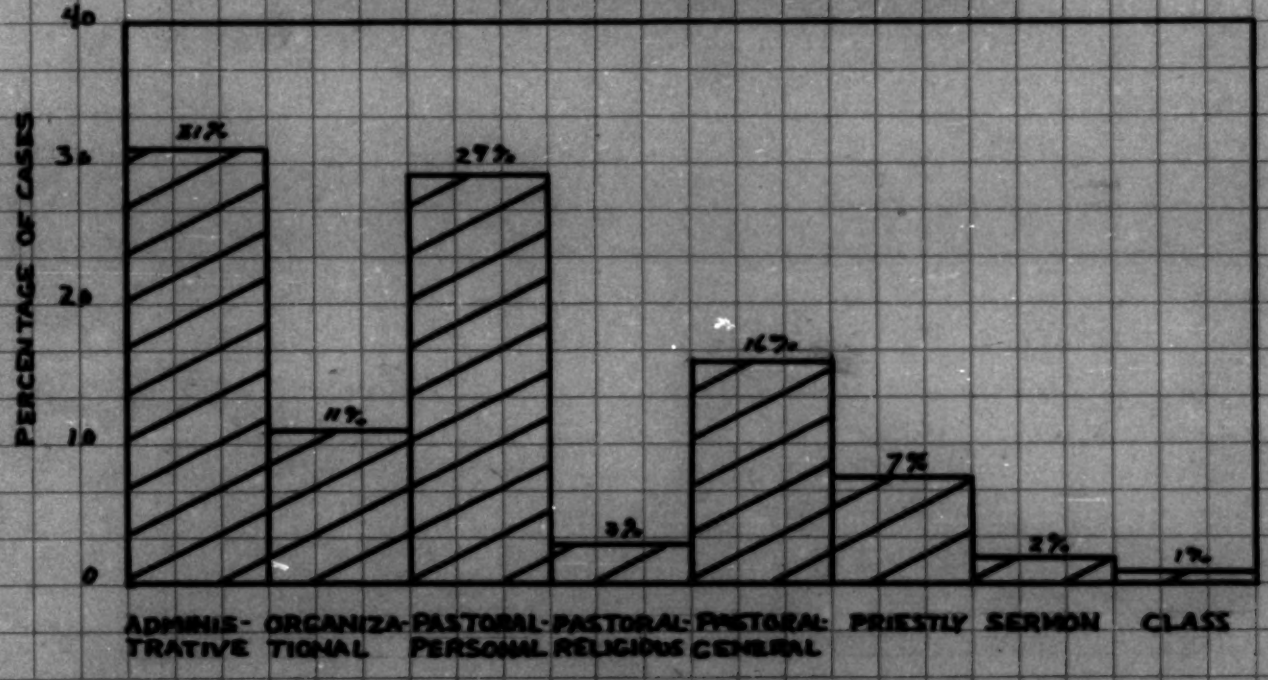


TOPICS WHICH ORIGINATED COMMUNICATIONS OF PERSONS WITH FIFTY PROTESTANT MINISTERS

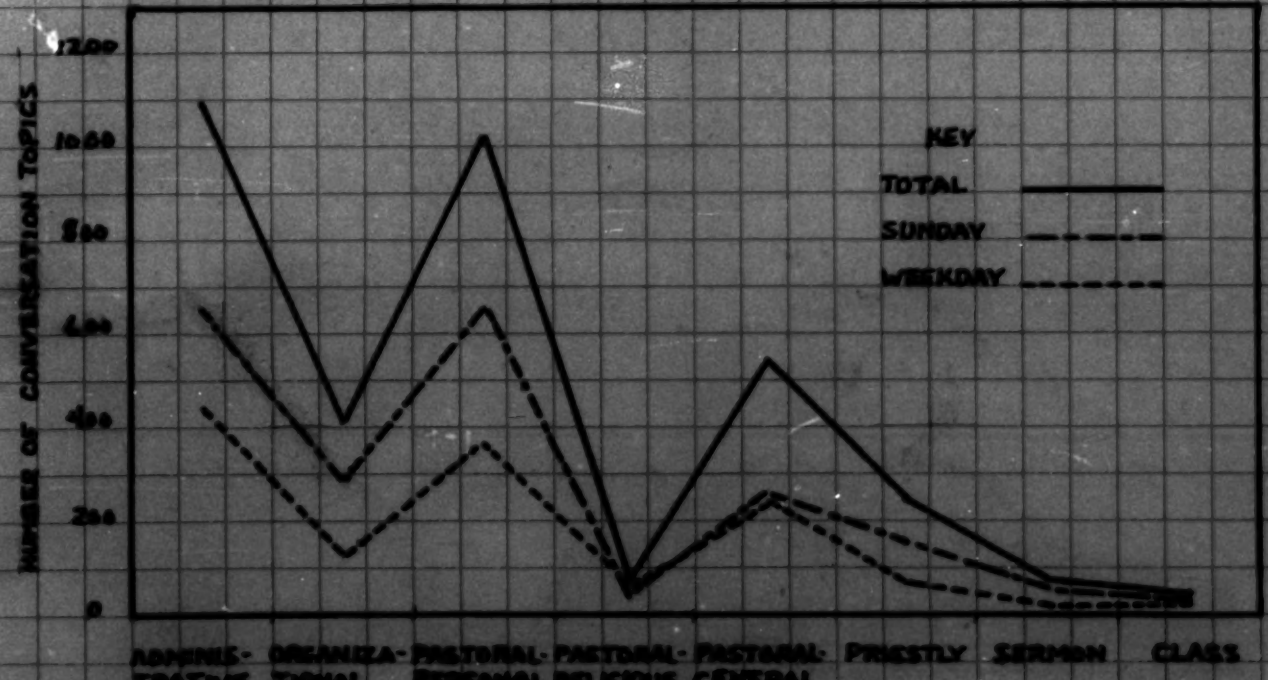


FIGURES 3 AND 4

ALL TOPICS OF CONVERSATION ENGAGING FIFTY PARISH MINISTERS, IN PERCENT



FREQUENCY OF ALL TOPICS OF CONVERSATION ENGAGING PARISH MINISTERS ON WEEKDAYS AND SUNDAYS



all personal subject matter (pastoral - personal, pastoral - religious, pastoral - general, priestly, sermon and class material) and all business subject matter (administrative and organizational), the personal concerns still originate more of the minister's communications, 55% to 44%.

When parishioners and others initiate conversation, they have a much heavier business orientation than a personal one. Instead of the balance between administrative and personal pastoral concerns, the conversations of other persons are loaded with administrative matters. All three pastoral types of communication together originate 34% of the communications, and administration 40%. Taking all personal types together, versus all business types confirms the predominance of business concerns, 53% to 47%. Parishioners and others do not raise religious questions any more than pastors do, although they originate more conversation about the sermon and class material. Other persons do not indulge in quite so much general conversation as ministers.

Analysis of these original or main topics of conversation is helpful in showing the difference between patterns of ministerial and non-ministerial conversation, but original topics do not tell the whole story. Communications rarely begin and end with one main topic. Some conversations run the complete range of eight topics before concluding, regardless of the material which provoked communication in the first place. It is possible, therefore, to find that the profile created by the entire range of topics is different from the profile created by original topics alone. That some differences are found, is partly indicated in Figure 3. Since duplication within a given content category has not been counted, for reasons

of reliability discussed in Chapter III, the data comprising this figure are on the conservative side. Of 3,516 separate topics of conversation accounted, 31% are administrative, and 48% pastoral, which is a close replica of the conversations originated by the ministers. Business and personal types of conversation are in a ratio of 42% to 58% respectively, which is not too different from the profile of original topics. The main difference, as we might expect, is an increase in general conversation and a decrease in administrative conversation.

Weekdays and Sundays

Figure 4, based upon the full range of topics, dramatically illustrates the relationship between weekday and Sunday topics of conversation. Is conversation with the minister different on the Sabbath? How may it be influenced by the religious activities and services which are the purpose of the day? Is communication lighter or heavier, more personally or more business oriented? The question whether personal conversation is different or more religious on Sunday must be answered in the negative.

That there is less discussion of religious ideas on Sunday is clear enough since it is in this area alone that Sunday communications drop below weekday levels. However, the number of contacts is really insignificant, less than one contact per minister! Comments about the worship service and substantial comments about the sermon flare up modestly on Sunday and die away to insignificance on weekdays. Even on Sunday these conversations never average more than three per minister.

Organizational topics increase most, proportionately, the weekday volume increasing by 150%. Personal communication increases almost 100%

to compete closely with the actual volume of administrative communication. On Sunday these two topics clearly dominate the conversation. In actual number of topics, administrative concerns hold the field on both weekdays and Sundays. General topics of conversation remain at about the same level on Sunday as on weekdays.

The overall increase of communication on Sunday, approaching 100%, is reflected in gains in almost all subject matter areas, some modest and some very substantial.

What Insiders and Outsiders Talk About

Do conversations of church members differ from those of outsiders? Is there a realm of communication content not usually open to those outside the fold, but enjoyed by those who stand in a more intimate relationship of fellowship? Table 1 summarizes the facts along this dimension, insofar as they are manifest in weekday conversations.

The conversations of insiders and outsiders do not differ as much as might be expected. Generally speaking there is a drop in all topics of conversation with outsiders, consistent with the difference in total volume of communication. But administrative and personal topics are given most consideration in either case. A sharp and understandable difference is the loss of organizational conversation with outsiders. As much general conversation is held with outsiders as with insiders.

More important than the difference between insiders and outsiders themselves, is the difference in conversations originated by the minister or by another. When engaged in communication with an insider, the ministers are more oriented toward personal concerns, with administration

TABLE 1

ORIGINAL TOPICS OF CONVERSATION WITH INSIDERS AND OUTSIDERS AND THE DIRECTION OF COMMUNICATION

SUBJECT MATTER	INSIDERS		OUTSIDERS	
	TO	FROM	TO	FROM
Administrative	94	106	93	50
Organizational	22	39	10	2
Pastoral - Personal	107	28	68	34
Pastoral - Religious	10	3	3	1
Pastoral - General	31	20	36	9
Priestly	5	11	5	6
Sermon	0	1	0	3
Class	1	3	2	1

a very close second. In contrast, when parishioners originate communication, administrative concerns tower over personal ones better than three to one. The fact that there is so much administrative conversation, then, is traceable more to the parishioner than to the minister. When dealing with persons outside the church, the minister finds no relief from this administrative routine, administrative topics outranking all others again. Outsiders almost never become engaged in communication with ministers on topics of general interest alone.

Content Analysis of Function

During the intensive interview held with each minister, the personal contacts listed for weekdays was classified in five content categories: counsel and advice, information passing, instructions, spiritual guidance, or some other service. By taking account of the number of communications falling in these categories we can tell something about the minister's function. This dispersion is summarized in Table 2.

Although the pile-up in the catch-all category "some other service" reflects a limitation of this scheme of analysis, it is nevertheless revealing how much non-professional or semi-professional service is given. The giving and receiving of information, for example, accounts for almost half of all contacts, while the more specialized professional functions of giving counsel or advice characterizes only 9%, spiritual guidance 13%, and instructions 8%. In the light of this difference, it is not surprising that 74% of the ministers report that interruption is one of their constant administrative problems.

TABLE 2

THE MINISTER'S FUNCTION IN WEEKDAY COMMUNICATION
ACCORDING TO A FIVE-CATEGORY CONTENT ANALYSIS

FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES	INCOMING EVENTS	OUTGOING EVENTS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
Counsel and Advice Giving	35	32	67	9 %
Information Giving	201	171	372	46 %
Instruction Giving	19	47	66	8 %
Spiritual Guidance	2	99	101	13 %
Other Services	60	136	196	24 %
TOTALS	317	485	802	100 %

Spiritual guidance is not as rare an item as might have been predicted, accounting for 13% of the total. The very sharp difference between incoming and outgoing spiritual guidance may indicate that the term has a limited professional meaning. The ministers (who make all these judgments) may have a professional bias of some kind, but it is still significant that they rarely perceive that those who initiate conversation with them do so to receive spiritual guidance.

Personal Means of Communication

Shifting our attention to the means of communication employed by ministers we find a wide range of information indicating the usual and unusual means of access, the number of persons contacted by these means, and their cost in minutes. Limiting consideration at first to the person-to-person means of communication, Figures 5 and 6 indicate graphically the difference in volume of communication and cost in time. The great contrast in these two figures indicates the sharp conflict between the time spent and the number of persons contacted by the eight means of communication. Passing conversation, for example, is the least costly in time, yet yields the most contacts. Counseling, at the other extreme, is most costly in time yet yields the least number of contacts. Together they define the polar extremes of the problem of superficiality versus depth in parish communication.

Most persons are seen in face-to-face situations by the minister, the number of consultations and passing conversations, counseling and home visitations far outnumbering communications by telephone and letter. Brief type contacts costing three, four, or at most seven minutes each

FIGURE 5

NUMBER OF PERSONS CONTACTED BY EIGHT PERSONAL MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

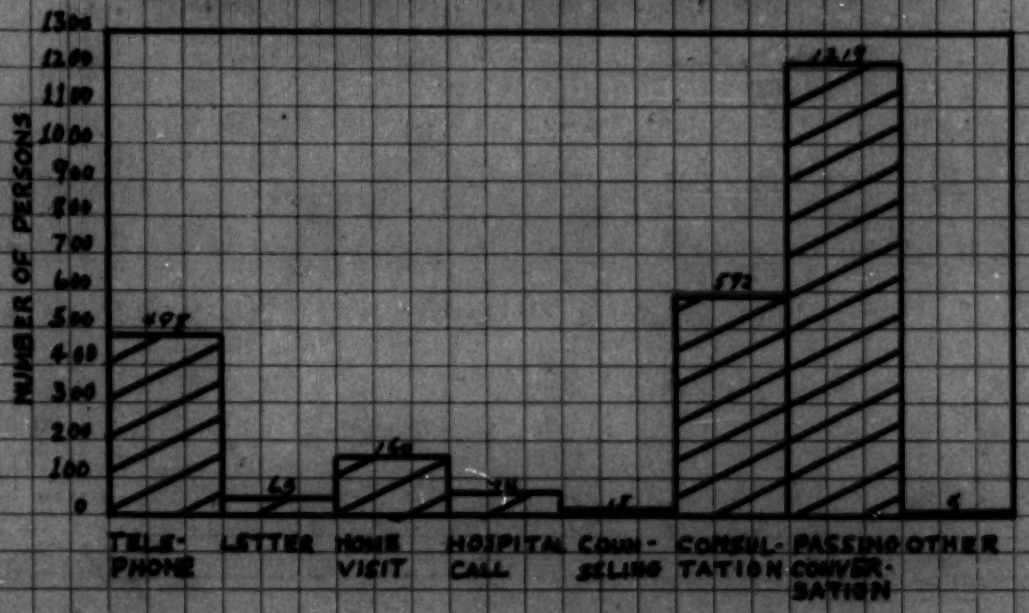
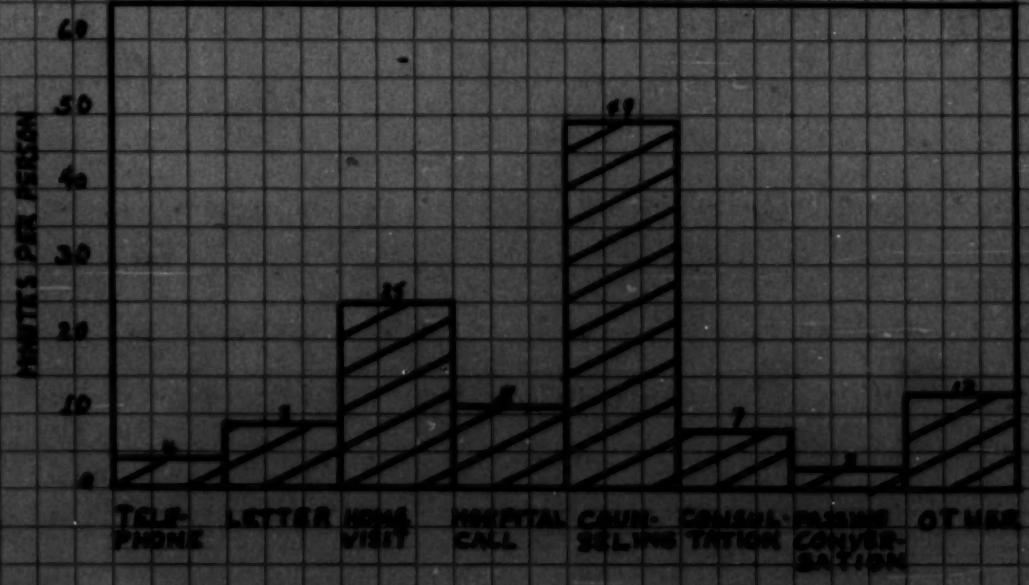


FIGURE 6

TIME COST PER PERSON OF EIGHT PERSONAL MEANS OF COMMUNICATION



outnumber all other type contacts four to one emphasizing the importance of swift judgment, fleeting impressions, rapid rapport-building and use of non-verbal cues as vital communication skills for the pastor. Longer type communications like home visits (25 minutes average) and counseling sessions (49 minutes average) account for only 8% of the total. Hospital visits, averaging 11 mimutes each stand between the brief and the longer contacts.

The use of these eight personal means of communication varies through the morning, afternoon, and evening, revealing certain regular patterns of interaction. Such patterns can guide us in the formulation of communication strategies. Table 3 reveals that in these fifty parishes there are certain peak times for each media. The morning hours, for example, are peak times for telephoning, letter-writing, and consultations, while the afternoon is a peak time for home visitation, hospital calling, and passing conversation. The evening is the peak time for counseling, though the number of counseling sessions found in this daily sample is small. With the exception of counseling, all other personal communication drops off in the evening in favor of group and committee events. The heaviest hours for the various means are as follows: Telephone, equally heavy from 9 to 12 in the morning, letters from 9 to 10 AM, home visits between 2 and 4 PM, and passing conversations around the lunch and supper hours.

As might be expected the weekday and Sunday pattern of communication by these personal means is different. As shown in Table 4 there is a huge

TABLE 3

PERSONAL MEANS OF COMMUNICATION USED BY FIFTY PARISH MINISTERS ON WEEKDAY MORNINGS, AFTERNOONS, AND EVENINGS

MEANS OF PERSON TO PERSON COMMUNICATION	TOTAL CONTACTS 7 - 11:59	TOTAL CONTACTS 12 - 5:59	TOTAL CONTACTS 6 - 12
Telephone	144	105	65
Letters	35	9	8
Home Visit	27	78	20
Hospital	14	47	5
Counseling	2	2	5
Consultation	64	52	43
Passing Conversations	36	99	60

92% jump in the number of personal communications on Sunday. What certain authors have termed "the shape of Sunday" takes on meaning from this fact alone.[1] This increase does not include the large number of greetings and handshakes with people at the door, but only those conversations where there was definite subject matter in addition to a greeting, and a full set of recorded facts about the event. However, by means of a Sunday observer, the complete set of information on the number of greetings and handshakes was recorded separately. Tabulation of these brief encounters reveals a range of 5 to 378 contacts per minister, or an average for the group of 94 contacts in addition to other extended conversation. In reality, therefore, communication not only almost doubles (92%) on Sunday, but this doubling is accompanied by a rushing stream of other passing contacts which also have to be absorbed.

While such brief conversations and contacts vastly increase on Sunday, other types of communication uniformly decrease. Ministers do not generally make home or hospital visits, or write letters on Sunday, and even the telephone only rings half as often. The only exception to the rule is provided by counseling activities, which are equally present on Sundays as on weekdays.

The most popular means of communication on weekdays is the telephone, by which 34% of the total persons contacted are reached. With a more limited range of contacts, but next in order of use is "passing conversation", the accidental and unplanned way that a large amount of communication takes place.

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[1]Virginia Dawson and Betty Wilson, The Shape of Sunday: An Intimate Biography of Lloyd C. Douglas, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1952).

TABLE 4

PERSONAL MEANS OF COMMUNICATION USED BY FIFTY PARISH MINISTERS ON WEEKDAYS AND SUNDAYS

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION	NUMBER OF WEEKDAY CONTACTS	NUMBER OF SUNDAY CONTACTS	TOTAL BY MEANS
Telephone	314	184	498
Letter	52	13	65
Home Visit	125	35	160
Hospital Visit	66	8	74
Counseling	9	9	18
Consultation	159	433	592
Passing Conversation	195	1024	1219
Others	3	2	5
TOTAL CONTACTS	923	1708	2631

Communication in Groups

To understand the whole range of ministerial communication it is essential to move beyond a consideration of contacts made in person-to-person situations only, to some measurement of communication in groups and committees, and of communication by mass media. Detailed analysis of communication in each of these areas is not within the scope of the present research, but a careful inventory may call attention to the range of these activities and pave the way for further research.

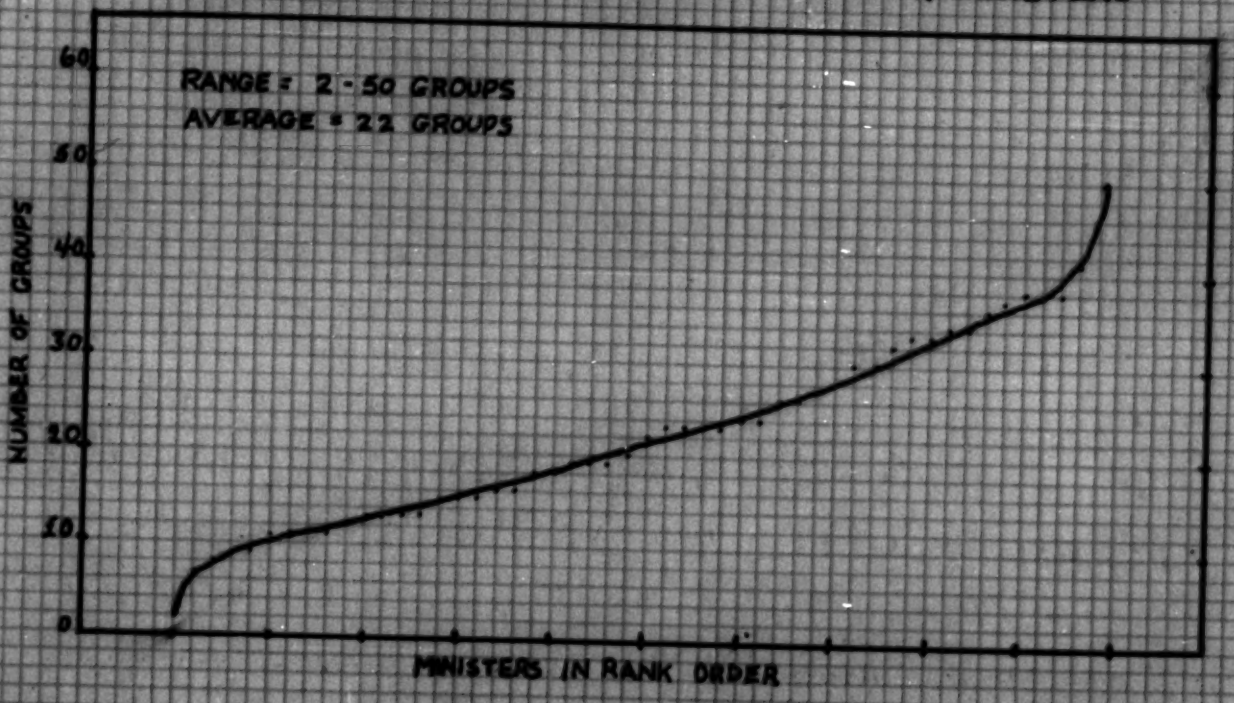
The deep involvement of nearly all ministers in groups and committees is clearly illustrated in Figures 7 and 8. Figure 7 is an inventory of the number of groups in which a single minister holds active membership, arranged in rank order from the least involved to the most involved minister. The range is from membership in only 2 groups to membership in 50, the ministers averaging 22 groups each. These groups are not equal in their demands since they may be weekly, monthly or quarterly, but all of them make a regular demand upon the time of the ministers involved.

It is Figure 8 which completes the picture by translating number of committees into number of hours per month, showing clearly what these activities cost in time. Arranging the fifty ministers in rank order again by total number of hours spent in group and committee work, we find a very smooth curve in a range from 4 to 147 hours per month spent by individual ministers. The average for the group is a staggering 67 hours per month!

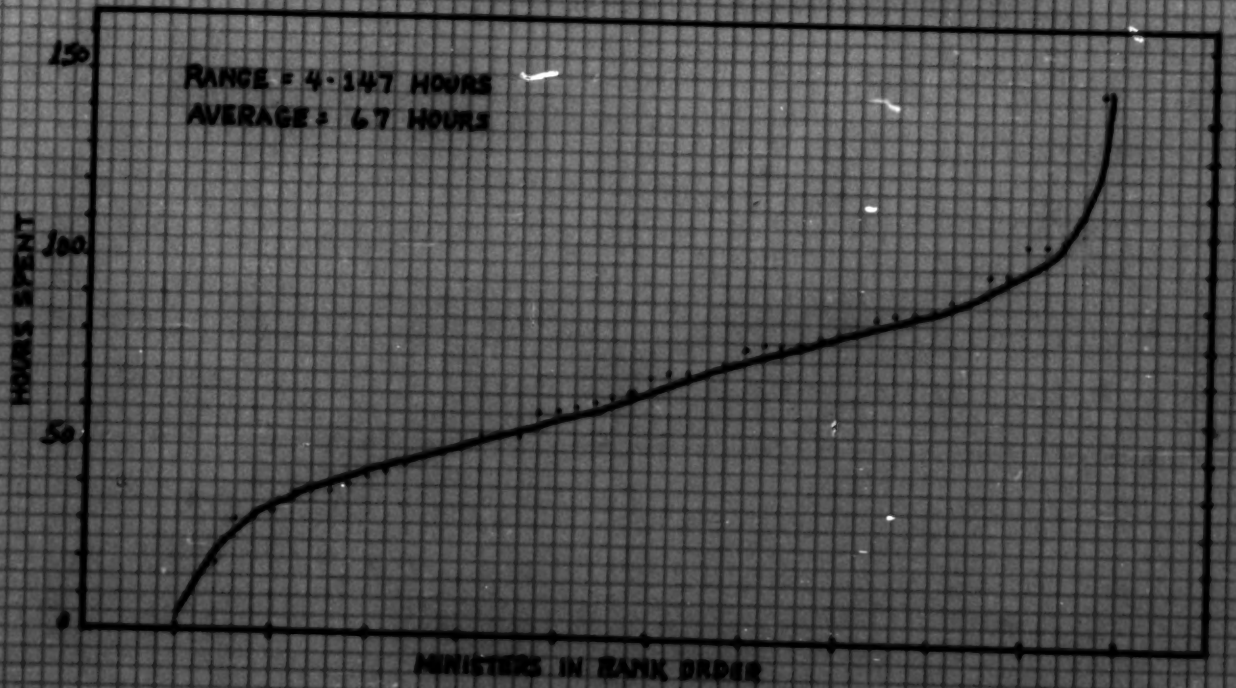
Each of these curves is sufficiently smooth and shallow to indicate

FIGURES 7 AND 8

NUMBER OF GROUPS AND COMMITTEES ATTENDED REGULARLY BY FIFTY PROTESTANT PARISH MINISTERS



HOURS SPENT MONTHLY WITH GROUPS AND COMMITTEES BY FIFTY PROTESTANT PARISH MINISTERS



that there is nothing exceptional about the minister's participation in groups today. Instead, group activity seems characteristic. This pattern of involvement holds for ministers of all ages, and drops off only in the extreme upper range.[1] If we use Blizzard's seventy hour week as a guide, it appears that our ministers are spending the equivalent of one 70 hour work week each month in committees and groups.

Use of Mass Media in the Parish

How often do ministers employ mass media of communication in their parish work? Interview material reveals that 80% of the churches in this study make at least weekly use of the public newspaper to publicize their activities. Two churches use the newspaper twice a week, and one daily, in spreading parish information. Such a high percentage of active participation in the public press is probably traceable to the encouragement given by a Lynn publisher to the reporting of religious news, a fact that may make this finding unique.

Radio broadcasting opportunities are shared among the entire clergy on a once or twice a year basis, with the exception of one minister who is heard each Sunday in a re-broadcast of a portion of his Sunday morning service. No other minister in the study has regular recourse to radio or television as a means of communication, although some take advantage of submitting news items to be read in a daily radio program devoted to community events. A telephone dial-a-prayer service is offered by a Baptist minister, whose 250 daily listeners receive a thirty second meditation and prayer.

Within the parish three types of printed media are in fairly

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[1] A table summarizing this information is contained in the Appendix.

common use: the parish letter, church newspaper, and the Sunday Bulletin. Ministers send on an average of five printed letters to the entire parish each year, though some send none and some send as many as thirteen during the year. Church newspapers are more popular, 58% of the churches mailing some type of newspaper to the whole mailing list. Half of these circulate weekly and half monthly. By far the most universal media in use, however, is the Sunday Bulletin, which is used by 82% of the churches to put timely information into the hands of those who attend services. Ministers have major responsibility for editing and producing all of these printed materials on a weekly or monthly basis, as the case may be. In the case of the weekly bulletin, 70% of the ministers do all of the editorial work involved, while 30% make contributions only. Nearly one quarter of all the ministers (24%) end up doing the clerical work also, including stencil-typing, mimeographing, and folding operations.

CHAPTER V

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND MOTIVES

Chapters four and five are devoted to the presentation of research findings, chapter four to the contents of communication and the means employed, chapter five to the personal network of communication and possible motivating factors at work. Evaluation and discussion of the findings is limited to chapters VI and VII.

Insiders and Outsiders

We turn first to the analysis of the personal network of communication. Who is involved? What are these persons like? In answering these questions we are describing the total community in which the minister is involved, and we are deepening our knowledge of the particular community which is the Church. Theologians have long debated whether the Church is really as open as it ought to be, or whether it has extended its influence into the community or drawn inside itself for security? Has the education of the minister set him apart from his people, or prevented his association with persons of every occupation? Is he neglecting the younger or the older generation? Are younger ministers more active than older ministers in communication? Have the churches become a woman's organization and so lost the line of communication with men? We move toward an answer in this chapter.

Insofar as the activity of the minister himself is concerned, the volume of communication with insiders and outsiders is not far out of balance. A study of the weekday conversations reveals that 60% of his

communication is with persons inside the church, and 40% is with persons outside. Insiders naturally have a variety of concerns which involve communication with the minister and we would expect a large portion of his communication to fall into this inside class. To find an almost equally large proportion of communication directed beyond the church constituancy, however, may be considered more remarkable. Active lines of communication regularly extend into the larger community, suggesting an almost maximum amount of interrelationship, and denying stereotype notions of isolation from the community. Table 5 summarizes these data.

Occupations of Communicators

Table 5 also illustrates the breakdown of these inside/outside communications into the occupational categories of the United States Census. Our observation is deepened through a knowledge of the type of persons inside and outside the Church to whom the minister is talking. Ministers as a group are in communication with persons of all occupational types. Distribution is far from even, however, advertising certain weaknesses and excesses. Housewives clearly predominate, accounting for 25% of all weekday communication, followed by professional persons (20%), clerical workers (12%) and others. Housewives compose 33% of the inside group, professionals 33% of the outside group. Eighty percent of all persons engaged in communication fall into a white collar class including professionals, managers, clerical and sales workers, housewives, retired persons and students. There is a greater percentage of non-white-collar laborers in the inside group; these account for 20% of the inside communication.

TABLE 5

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF PERSONS IN WEEKDAY COMMUNICATION WITH FIFTY PROTESTANT MINISTERS

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS	NUMBER OF INSIDERS	NUMBER OF OUTSIDERS	TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES
1. Professional	59	108	167
2. Managers	33	41	74
3. Clerical	49	44	93
4. Sales Workers	10	13	23
5. Craftsmen, Foremen	36	7	43
6. Operatives	18	7	25
7. Domestic Servants	10	3	13
8. Service Workers	21	9	30
9. Laborers	9	3	12
10. Housewives	156	44	200
11. Retired	43	14	57
12. Students	23	10	33
13. Unknown	15	20	35
Total Cases	482	323	805
Percentage of Total	60%	40%	

Sex, Age, and Marital Status

What is the sex, age, and marital status of those who are in touch with the minister? Figure 9 shows the total distribution of males and females by the hour for the entire period. The two lines of this graph, representing the number of males and the number of females in communication, are remarkably similar. Through the early morning, the entire afternoon, and evening, the distribution of male and female calls is virtually the same. The only exception in this congruent pattern is from 11 to 12 noon, when the number of males drops off sharply.

Shifting attention to the actual number of these males and females, and the amount of time they occupy communicating with the ministers, we find that there are actually more males rather than less, although the balance is extremely close. Table 6 reveals that the exact number of males is 1315 or 51%, and the number of females is 1246 or 49%. In view of the difficulty of remaining in contact with males through the daytime hours, these figures seem quite unusual. Apparently these men are professionals, managers, retired, service workers or operatives.

In point of time, the male communications take slightly longer than the female communications, as rude a shock as this is to the universal myth of female talkativeness. Females talk on the average only five minutes, while their male counterparts average seven.

The bar graphs of Figures 10 and 11 showing the frequency of contacts with single, married, widowed, widowers, divorced, and separated persons show a large predominance of contacts with married persons. Married persons outnumber singles four to one on weekdays, and almost three to one

FIGURE 9

HOURLY DISTRIBUTION OF CONTACTS WITH MALES AND FEMALES BY FIFTY PROTESTANT MINISTERS

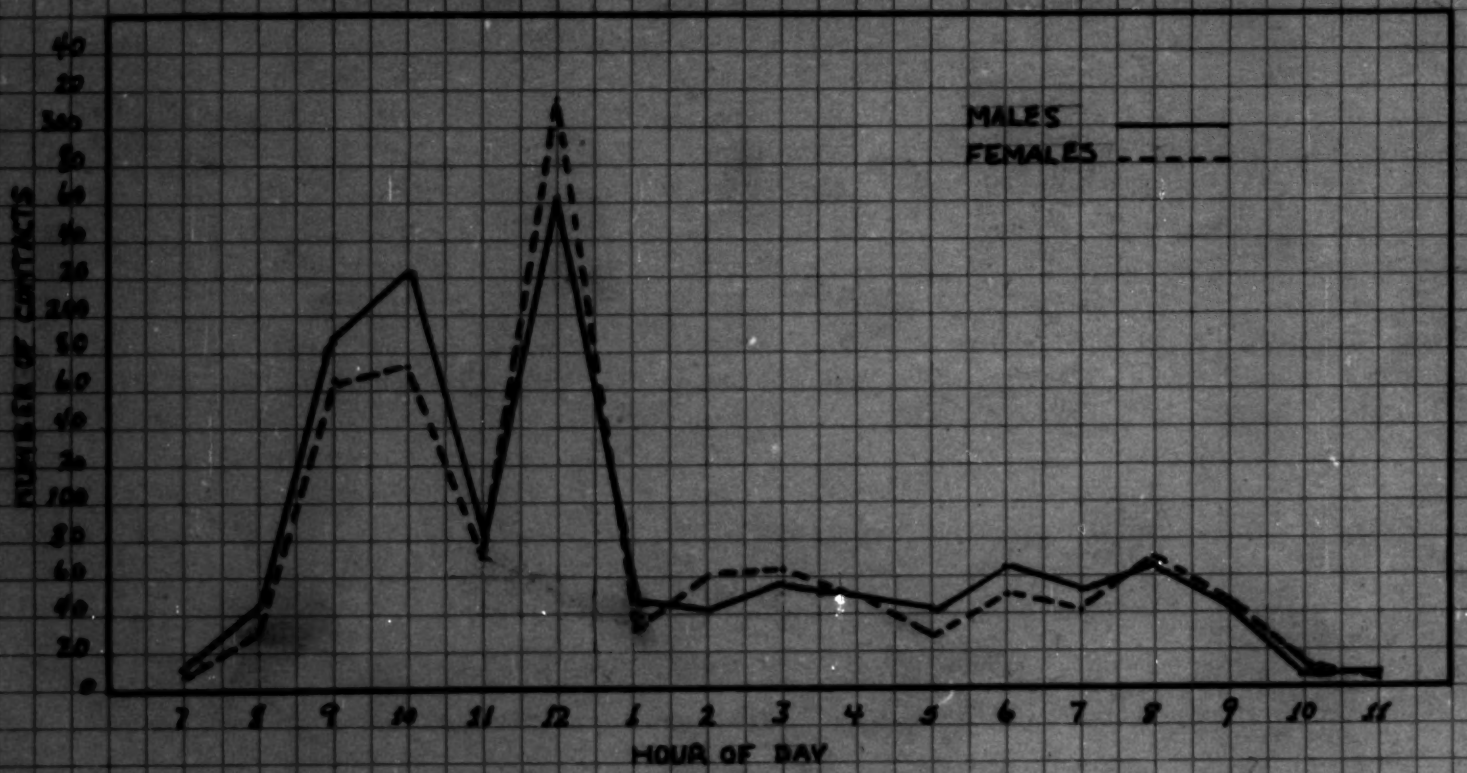


TABLE 6

TIME SPENT COMMUNICATING
WITH MALES AND FEMALES BY FIFTY
PROTESTANT PARISH MINISTERS

SEX	NUMBER OF CASES	PERCENT OF TOTAL	NUMBER OF MINUTES	MINUTES PER PERSON
Male	1315	51%	9,543	7
Female	1246	49%	6,519	5

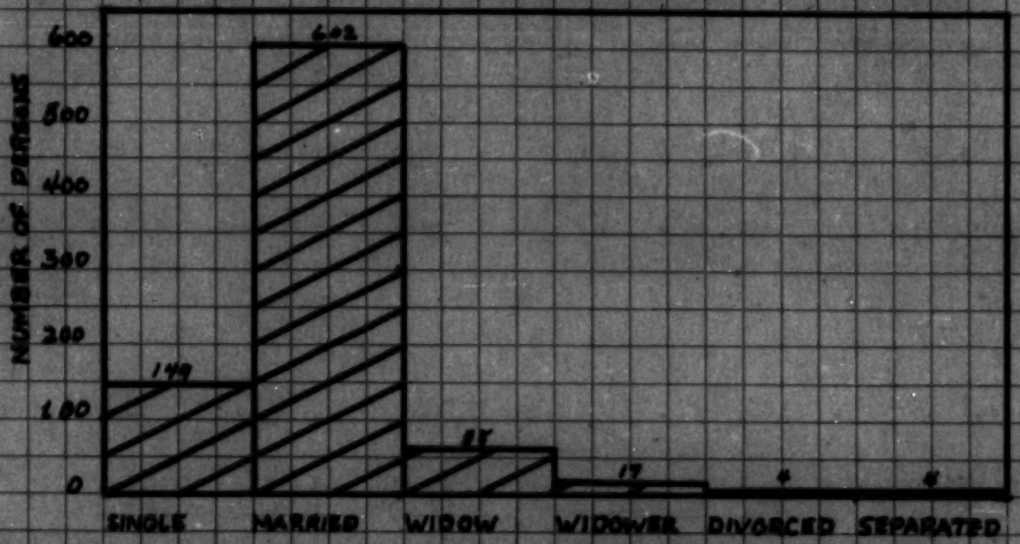
on Sundays. These figures indicate clearly that ministers are in communication with far more married persons than single, and that this difference is partly made up on Sunday, when contacts with single persons almost triples.

The age distribution of persons in communication with these fifty parish ministers is well rounded, with normal increases in the middle range and drop-offs for the early and late decades. The number of persons in each category is higher on the upper end of the curve than on the lower, indicating greater numbers of people in the forties, fifties, and sixties, than in the thirties, twenties, and teens, respectively. Persons in the forties and thirties are most frequently in communication with the ministers, and those in the fifties and sixties are next. See Figure 12. The predominance of persons over thirty may partly explain the rather large difference between the number of single and married persons seen, the single persons falling normally in the first three decades.

Figure 12 also indicates the similarity of the weekday and Sunday distribution of ages. The curves are all but congruent, the only exception being a large influx of teenagers and a slight increase of fifty year olds on Sunday. Sunday brings an increase of communication with persons of all ages, and especially the most popular ages, from thirty to fifty. The greatest weaknesses in both weekday and Sunday communication are at the extremes, the least number of contacts being with those under twenty. On weekdays, ministers communicate with more persons seventy years old and older, than with all those under twenty.

FIGURES 10 AND 11

MARITAL STATUS OF PERSONS IN COMMUNICATION WITH FIFTY PROTESTANT PARISH MINISTERS ON WEEKDAYS



MARITAL STATUS OF PERSONS IN COMMUNICATION WITH FIFTY PROTESTANT PARISH MINISTERS ON SUNDAYS

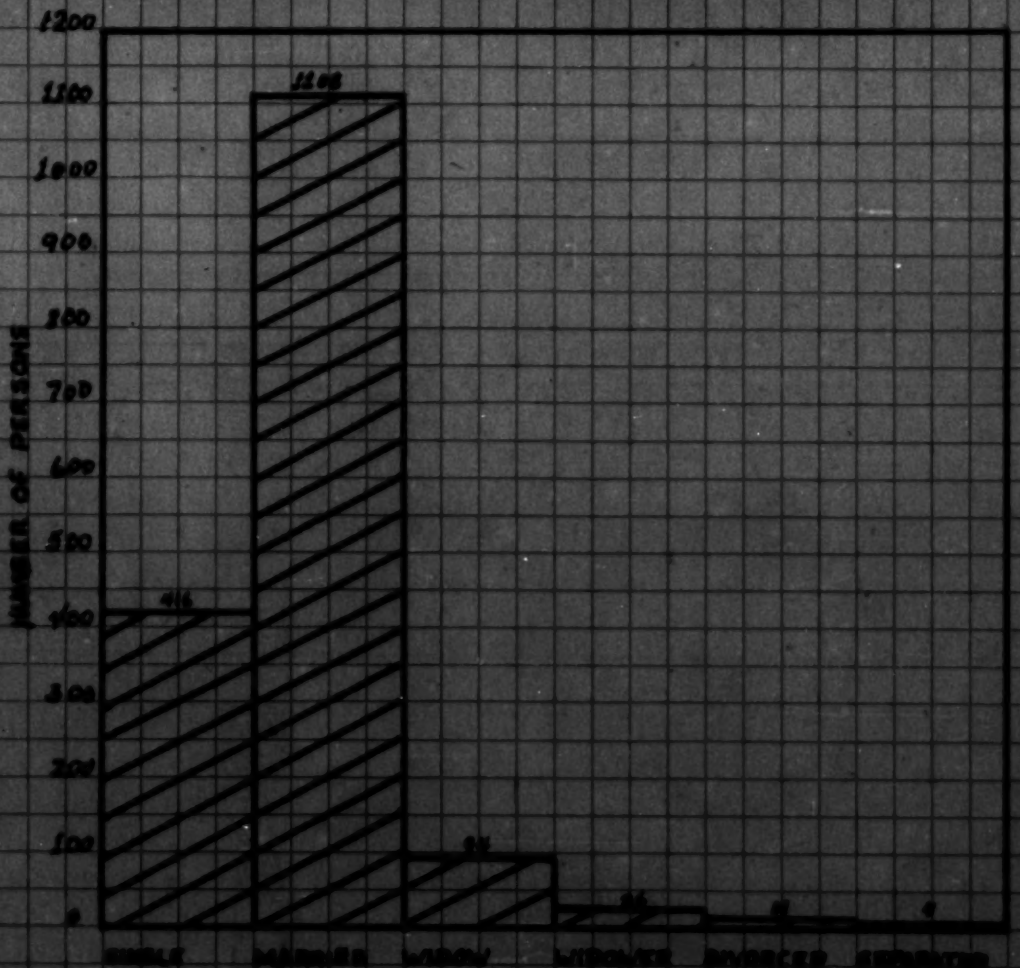
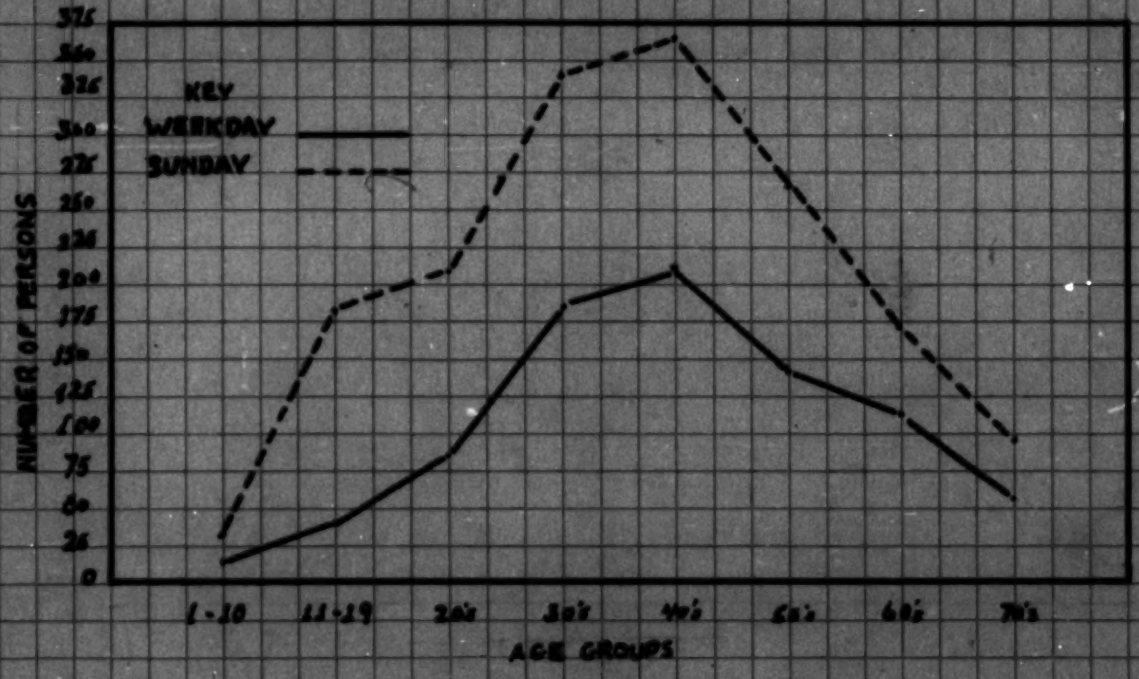


FIGURE 12

AGE OF PERSONS IN COMMUNICATION WITH FIFTY PROTESTANT MINISTERS ON WEEKDAYS AND SUNDAYS



Age as a Selective Factor in Communication

The measurement of motives is a highly abstract and hazardous venture, particularly in real life social situations. Motives are recognized to be complex and no single attempt at measurement is likely to be adequate. Yet it is important to look for and isolate certain factors which appear to influence behavior, looking toward the greater control of ourselves and our environment which enlightenment may provide. In this research a modest attempt is made to determine the possible influence of several factors upon the personal network of communication. Each factor is more or less unconscious and has been predicted to have a stimulating or inhibiting effect upon the flow of communication to certain persons. The term "selective factor" or bias may be more specific and descriptive.

To what extent does the age of a minister effect the range of his communications with other persons? Do older ministers slow down, communicate with less people? Do younger ministers neglect the older members of the congregation in preference for the young people? How often do we communicate with persons because we like them, or need them, or because they are important to the church? What is the relationship of pressure of time to these factors? Is it true that ministers "call only when they want something," as one parishioner put it, or does the ministry still "give" more often than it receives?

Age groupings in this study were made by decades, the minister judging in each case the age of the person contacted. Unknowns were segregated. The number of persons found in each age range was presented in Figure 12.

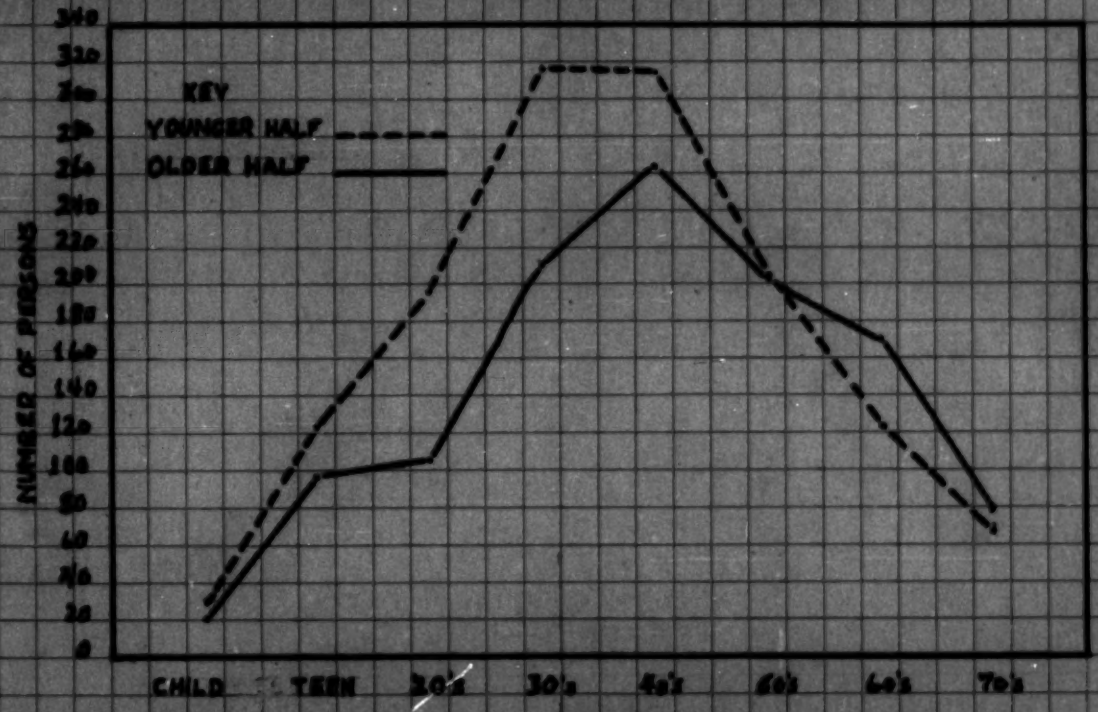
The ministerial group was arranged in rank order by actual age, divided into two equal halves and four approximately equal quarters. Using these four quartiles as the key a special tabulation was then made of the number of communicators found in each age bracket, yielding a score for the ministers of each quartile. With this data at hand it has been possible to graph the relationship of the minister's general age to the general ages of those who communicated with them. The results are highly suggestive.

The volume of communication engaged in by the younger and older halves of the ministerial group is close enough to explode the notion that older ministers do not keep in touch with things. Younger ministers are only slightly more vigorous, accounting for 55% of the total volume while their older collegues account for 45%. The range of ages from youngest to oldest is served equally well by young and old ministers, no obvious gaps appearing in the range as a whole. Neither young nor old ministers communicate very much with those under twenty years of age or over seventy, but it seems to make little or no difference whether the minister himself is old or young. See Figure 13.

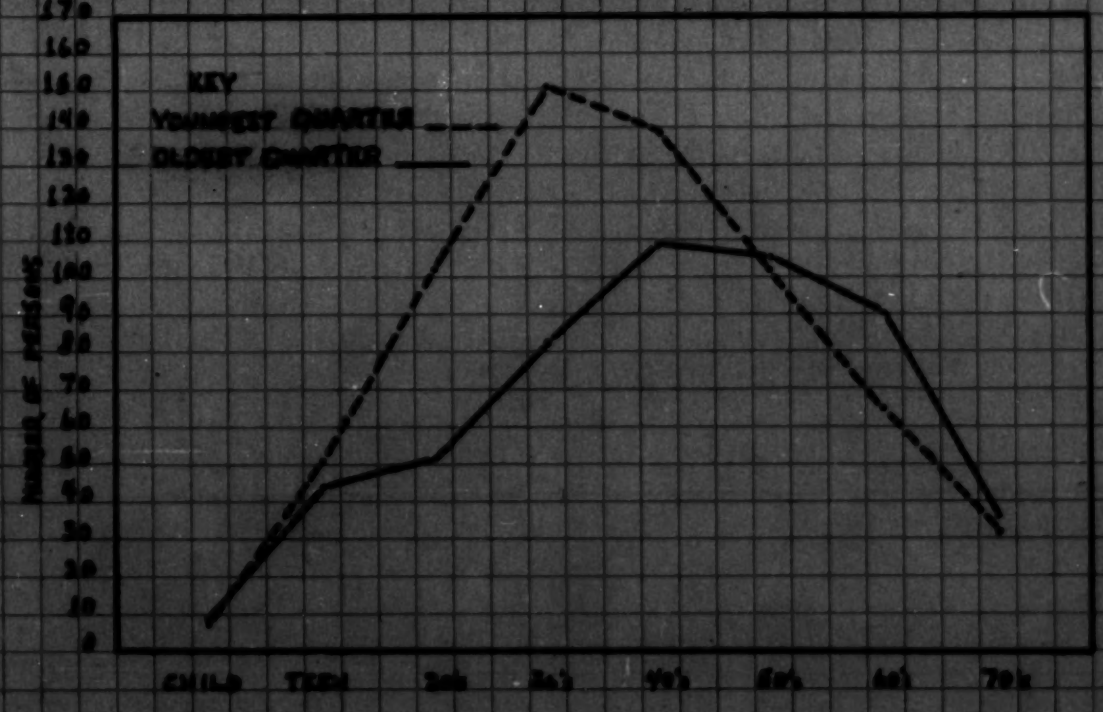
Equally interesting and perhaps more important is the fact that ministers appear to communicate more with persons close to their own age. Figure 13, for example, shows how the older men consistently communicate with less persons in every age category until their own, when they suddenly exceed the number of contacts made by their collegues. The average age of the youngest men is 30, in which decade they recorded the largest

FIGURES 13 AND 14

TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS IN EACH AGE GROUP IN COMMUNICATION WITH YOUNGER AND OLDER MINISTERS



TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS IN EACH AGE GROUP IN COMMUNICATION WITH THE YOUNGEST AND OLDEST MINISTERS



volume of communication. The oldest men, whose average age was 58 communicated most with those in the fifties and forties. This relationship is recorded in Figure 14 using the first and fourth extreme quartiles for emphasis. The greatest weakness in the age range of the older men seems to be for the twenties, while their greatest strength is in the fifties and sixties.

Four Interpersonal Factors

Four social and personal factors were studied in relation to the face to face communications which took place on weekdays. Each minister was asked to rate the communicant on a scale representing his degree of feeling. The four questions were: "How well do you <u>like</u> this person?", "How often do you personally <u>need</u> this person in your work?", "How <u>important</u> is this person to the church?", and "How <u>pressing</u> was this communication at the time?" The four scales were worded in the same way to allow expression in a range from a low of 1 to a high of 5. Tabulations and cross sorts of these four items have brought some significant matters to attention, although all four factors were not found to have equal significance.

Degree of liking was measured on a scale from 1, "not too well" to 5 "very well." The frequency of persons falling in each category is listed in Table 7. There is a steady and progressive increase in the number of persons from the lowest rating to the highest, with an overwhelming contrast of extremes. Only twelve persons were liked "not too well," while 349 are given the rating "very well." Thus only 2% of the persons provoke negative feeling, 9% slightly less negative. Comparisons of incoming and

TABLE 7

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RATINGS ON
FOUR POSSIBLE SELECTIVE FACTORS
IN COMMUNICATION

LIKING

Degree of Liking	Number of Cases
Very well	349
Well	138
Quite well	142
Fairly well	63
Not too well	12

PRESSURE

Degree of Pressure	Number of Cases
Very pressing	259
Pressing	185
Quite pressing	124
Fairly pressing	95
Not too pressing	142

NEED

Degree of Need	Number of Cases
Very often	165
Often	66
Quite often	91
Fairly often	86
Not too often	397

IMPORTANCE

Degree of Importance	Number of Cases
Very important	215
Important	83
Quite important	67
Fairly important	79
Not too important	355

outgoing communications were tabulated separately to discover if the factor of personal liking were more pronounced in either direction. After all, if a minister does not like a person very well he is not forced to originate communication; he may communicate only when drawn in by the other person. The analysis of incoming and outgoing types gives exactly the same picture, however, with no variations of more than 2% in each of the five degrees of feeling. This relationship is charted in Figure 15. Apparently the degree of liking or disliking is a mutual affair and has the same inhibiting effect upon the parishoner as on the minister. Our statistics do not prove that there <u>are</u> persons in the parish or community whom the ministers dislike, or who are hostile toward the minister; this can only be assumed. What we have indicated from the data is that communication with persons whom we dislike is extremely rare, while communication with those whom we like is overwhelmingly common.

What of the fact of pressure in the communication activities of the minister? How often are his communications rated as "not too pressing", or "very pressing"? Figure 16 indicates the answer. Some 70% of the minister's personal communications on weekdays are rated as "quite pressing", "pressing", or "very pressing", in an almost even progressive curve. The exception is that there is a significant 17% of communication which is rated "not too pressing". By and large, however, communication is usually done under pressure of time. Pressure was defined as the necessity to communicate in a matter of hours or at most a day or two, or forfeit the value of the call. The graph of incoming and outgoing characteristics with regard to pressure indicates that persons who initiate communication with

FIGURE 15

DEGREE OF LIKING AS A FACTOR IN
THE COMMUNICATIONS OF FIFTY PARISH MINISTERS

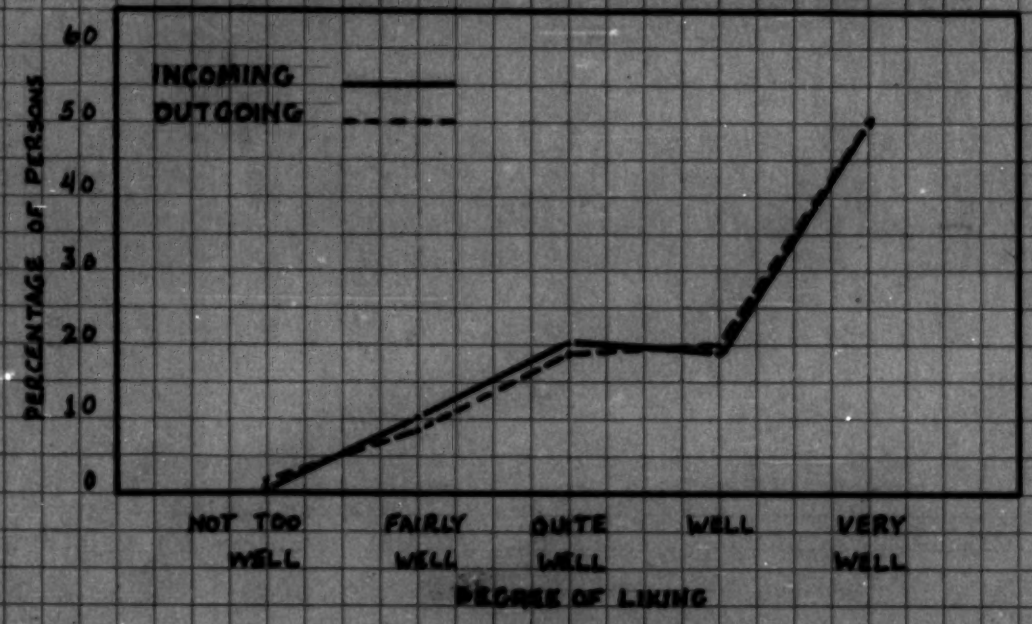
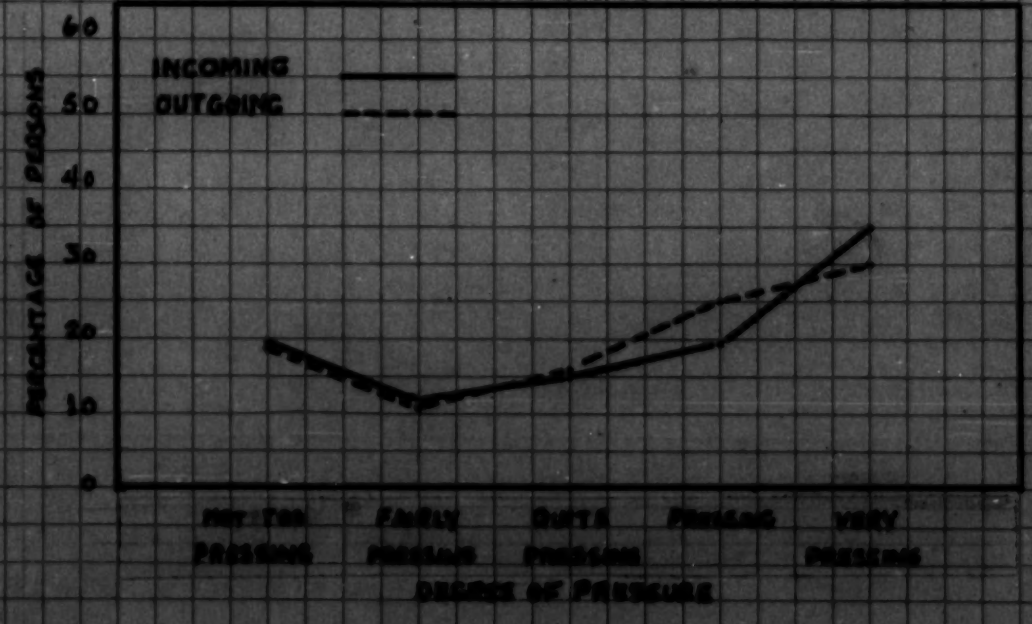


FIGURE 16

DEGREE OF PRESSURE AS A FACTOR IN
THE COMMUNICATIONS OF FIFTY PARISH MINISTERS



the minister are more often under severe pressure than the minister, a greater number of communications being designated "very pressing."

Study was made of the factor of needing because it seemed natural that those who had special need for each other would be drawn into communication more often. While this assumption may be quite true, it appears from the graph in Figure 17 that there are not enough persons who stand in this category to present a significant picture. The graph does indicate that ministers communicate frequently with those whom they need in the fulfilling of their duties, but there is a much larger group of persons with whom they communicate who are not needed very often or at all.

The same comment might be made regarding Figure 18, indicating the range of ratings given on the importance of persons to the church. In this case the split is a little more symmetrical, increasing progressively toward the extremes. A large number of persons held in communication are important to the church, in the sense that they are needed if the church is to get its work done, but there are even more persons at the other extreme, rated as not particularly important in terms of the work they actually perform for the church.

The interrelation of these four selective factors has been studied by means of grouping the high and low scores and by cross sorting. The comparison by cross sorting of lows and highs in these four areas was made in the hope of discovering a possible hierarchy of motivation. For example, when liking is low, which of the other three factors seems to account for the communication? Similarly, when pressure is low, which of the other three factors seems to provide an explanation for the contact?

FIGURE 17

DEGREE OF NEED AS A FACTOR IN
THE COMMUNICATIONS OF FIFTY PARISH MINISTERS

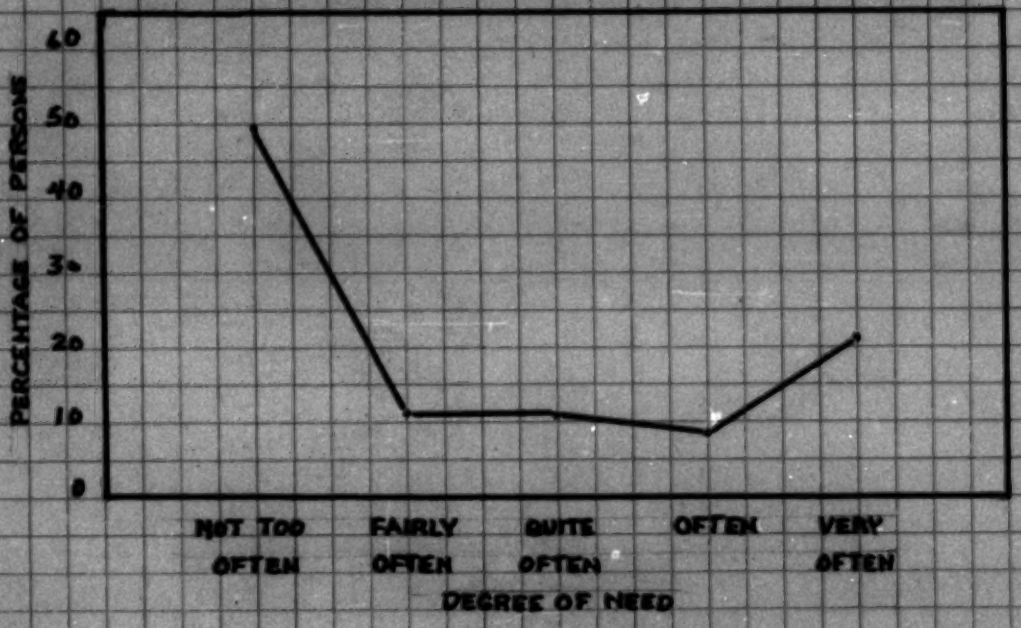
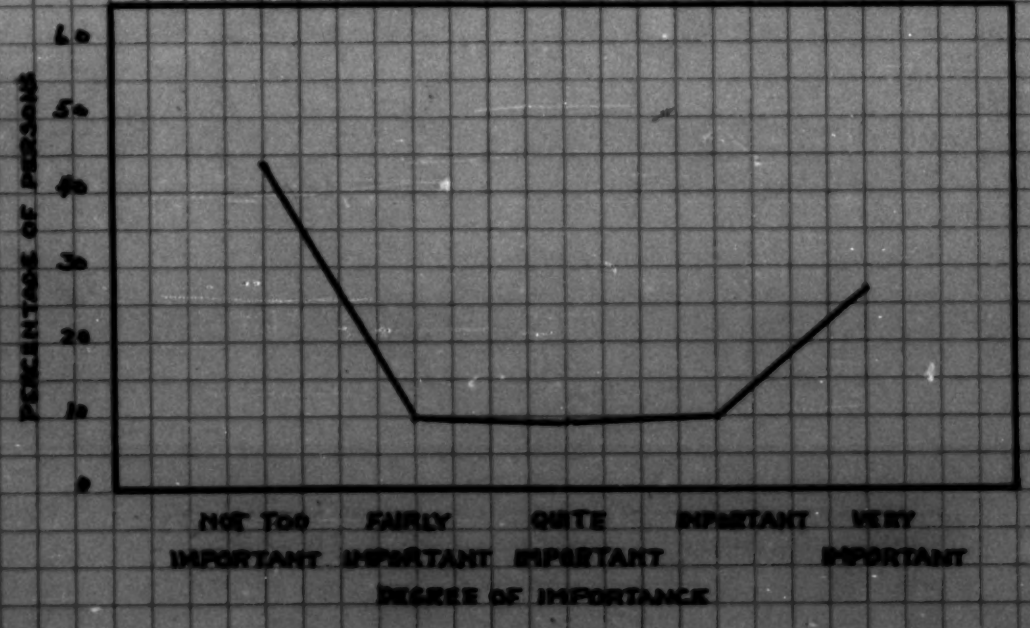


FIGURE 18

DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE AS A FACTOR IN
THE COMMUNICATIONS OF FIFTY PARISH MINISTERS



Some interesting possibilities were discovered, although it is clear that we do not have a complete system in these four factors. Considering the number of low scores made, the four factors are in the following order of priority from the least number of low scores to the most: liking (45 cases), pressure (228 cases), importance (432 cases), and needing (508 cases). Stating it positively, most high scores were recorded in this order, from the highest to lowest: liking, pressing, importance, and need.

Consider the factor of liking. When liking is low, it is pressure which receives the highest ratings, followed at a distance by importance and need. When need is low, pressure is high, followed closely by the factor of liking, less often importance and need. Finally, when importance is low, the greatest number of high ratings are found in pressure, followed closely by liking, with need far in the rear.

Generally speaking, it appears that liking and pressure are the most predictive factors. We communicate most to those whom we like, but when liking is lacking, we communicate because of pressure. Pressure is the second most consistent high scorer, but when pressure is lacking, then liking accounts for most of the communications. Importance is third in rank by volume, but when importance is low then pressure counts most, with liking a close second. The factor fourth and lowest in total volume is the pastor's need of help from these persons in his own work. When need is low it is pressure and liking which again receive top rating. These data are summarized in Table 8.

TABLES 8 AND 9

INTERRELATIONSHIP OF FOUR SELECTIVE FACTORS IN THE PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS OF FIFTY PARISH MINISTERS

NUMBER OF HIGH RATINGS	LOW LIKING N=45	LOW PRESSURE N=228	LOW IMPORTANCE N=432	LOW NEED N=508
High Degree of Liking		135	195	217
High Degree of Pressure	29		219	244
High Degree of Importance	12	54		47
High Degree of Need	4	39	18	

THE MOTIVE AND DIRECTION OF WEEKDAY COMMUNICATIONS OF FIFTY PARISH MINISTERS

MOTIVE	PERCENTAGE INCOMING TO MINISTERS	PERCENTAGE OUTGOING FROM MINISTERS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CASES
To Give Something	40%	61%	53%
To Get Something	60%	39%	47%

Giving and Getting

Turning finally to the last motivating factor isolated for special consideration, we employ a combination content-analysis and motive check. It is actually a content analysis of motive. One question on the supplementary sheet for personal weekday communications invited the minister to classify the primary motive of the originator as either "To give something," or "To get something." Under each of these headings were five specific possibilities, the same in each case. These have been presented in Table 2. In Table 9 we now present the breakdown of these responses in the two categories of giving and getting according to the direction of communication to and from the ministers. Converting the raw numbers into percentages of the total responses on these items, we note that the total percentage of each type is quite close, 53% judged as giving, and 47% as getting. Looking further, however, we find that there is a vital difference in the direction of communication. When persons initiate communication with the minister they do so less often to give than to get, 60% of the communications designed "to get something." In contrast, the ministers more often initiate communication "to give" rather than to get, 61% of the communications designed "to give something." By the minister's own standard at least, therefore, the ministry is still primarily a vocation of service, though there is also a large significance attached to the need for service on the part of others.

CHAPTER VI

CRUCIAL PROBLEMS OF COMMUNICATION

Our research began with the assumption that there were problems of communication in the parish ministry, and that these problems might be of great significance to the Church and the ministry alike. No single minister is ordinarily in a position to assess the problems of his colleagues, or to gather systematic information from which certain conclusions may safely be drawn. This is the peculiar task of research. When this study started it was hard to conceive what the exact problems of communication were and there was little information to cite in support. We may now look back at the parish ministry, with all the advantage of the facts, and formulate certain nuclear problems of communication which have arisen in the parish. Perhaps everyone will not view the facts in the same way or formulate the same "problems," but this researcher sees at least five which have taken on major significance in the recent history of the Church and are crucial to its mission.

The Problem of Specialization

No one can talk about everything at the same time. Deciding what to say at any given moment is a significant exercise of judgement and gives concrete expression to personality. In deciding on a life partner, or on a vocation, a person indirectly decides what he is going to be talking about for some time to come. He has chosen the subject matter of his life! Coming at it from the opposite direction, it is possible to

study the subject matter of a person's life in such a way as to allow the description of his vocation. This is what we have done to deepen our understanding of the ministry. By engaging in this study of subject matter we have done what every minister has done many times after an afternoon of home visitation, or an evening of work on the Sunday Bulletin. He has wondered whether what he was saying to people, face to face or by mass media, had anything to do with his reason for becoming a minister, and therefore whether it was really satisfying to him.

In the same way that no man can talk about everything at once, no minister goes into the ministry to do everything. His sense of calling into this work involves some things more than others, inevitably, and over the years of preparation and practice he comes to discover more realistically what his special talents in the ministry are. The New Testament speaks of these talents as "spiritual gifts," and it was on the basis of these particular gifts that assignments within the community of the Church were actually made. Some were teachers, some prophets, and some apostles. Some preached, while others served at the common meal. It was because of the variety of spiritual gifts possessed by those in the fellowship that the Church could perform its essential tasks and fulfill its purpose in the world.

What the early Church practiced for sound religious reasons the modern Church is only slowly learning to practice out of sheer frustration. Ordained "to preach," many modern ministers must preach "on the edge of desperation" because there is too little time for preparation.

Highly trained by college and seminary, many modern ministers seldom assume the teaching role, and have little or no time to read books. Others highly trained in counseling and pastoral care struggle to free themselves from administrative duties and have little time left in which to put their training to work. The personal problem which these ministers face is an old problem which everyone who enters the ministry must face on his own terms, and a new problem which may arise in each new parish. It is the problem of specialization.

Specialization as we know it today in the parish ministry is specialization in the most formal professional sense, and is limited narrowly to those larger or wealthier churches which can afford to support a team of ministers, each one of whom has chosen some area of specialization. The problem of specialization as it exists in the realm of communication, however, is a personal matter of deciding what to say and how to serve. It is the problem of vocational fulfilment faced by the minister who stands alone at the head of a parish.

Every minister has his own gifts, and therefore his own hierarchy of values concerning the basic roles of administrator, organizer, pastor, priest, preacher, and teacher. The problem of specialization is to fit this hierarchy of values into the order of things which is characteristic today. Figures 1 through 5 and Tables 1 and 2 describe the balance of vocational specialization which was characteristic of the fifty ministers of Greater Lynn, Massachusetts, during the period of this study. When demands are too great, then utilitarian values crowd out idealistic values in a practical struggle for survival. This is the source of the

role-stress which has received increasing attention in the last few years. Blizzard's recent findings are perfectly clear at this point and re-echo the findings of other researchers over the past three decades: values are in one order of priority, and practice in another. What is to be done? The problem of vocational fulfillment is crucial in every field of service, and no less in the ministry, where the sense of purpose is the keystone which holds the whole structure together. Without specialization there cannot be fulfillment, and without fulfillment, there can only be breakdown of communication and hence, of the minister's vocation.

The Problem of Supply and Demand

A serious part of the problem of specialization is the great demand for the services of a general practitioner who can personally supply what is needed. In rather recent times, perhaps only since the opening of the twentieth century or since the first world war, there has been an exceptional development in the American churches. The activity and influence of the churches in the public life, the modernization of its facilities and methods, the energetic expansion of group and committee life, and the projection of the minister into the ongoing civic and social life of the community has changed the face of American Protestantism, and with it the Protestant parish ministry. Parishioners and non-parishioners alike look to the minister for a bewildering variety of services. The growing bureaucracy of the churches nationally, with boards, interboards, departments, commissions, and divisions may be

interpreted as an effort to solve the problem of specialization, but it has come to rest on the shoulders of the parish minister, who must now struggle through the multitudinous demands of these agencies before solving his own problem of specialization. It is difficult to overestimate the volume of new demands which have flooded the modern American parish. As modern life has become more complex and standards of living have gone up, institutional standards have also been raised, and the varieties of expectation on the part of church people have been inflated along with them. We have characterized this in a simple term of the marketplace, "demand".

It has naturally become a part of the ministry in the modern Church to try to meet that demand, and to supply it. But the supplying of this demand is not a solution; it is a problem. It is a problem which the Church would have faced, rather than the minister, had the Church not already abdicated much of its original responsibility to the minister. Unfortunately, or fortunately, as the case may be, the minister is not equal to this demand, and danger signals have been sent up calling attention to a genuine problem. The question is how the Church can get itself together to meet the demands of the present age.

What resources does the church have to throw into the breech? Have they equipment for communication? Have they personnel to speed and share in the total task of communication? Have they financial means to undergird a modern program of communication? Are they ready with the answers to the questions which are being asked by the present generation?

These are all problems of communication, vital to the Church today and tomorrow. Yet if the proper resources and arrangements are missing, opportunity is lost.

The churches and pastors in this study have a basic group of communication instruments. Telephones, typewriters, and duplicators are almost universal, although 50% of the churches have no telephone at the church itself. Motion picture projectors are owned by 68% of them, variable speed phonographs by 72% and filmstrip projectors by 80%. It is rare to find a battery of telephones in use, or equipment for recording or dictation. Facilities for public address, including tower broadcasting equipment are also rare.

A more serious set of shortcomings is seen in the lack of staff or office help, and the consequent shifting of a mass of routine administrative duties onto the minister. Seventy percent of the men typewrite church correspondence themselves, 24% do all the secretarial work on the Sunday bulletin, including writing, typing, mimeographing and folding. When they send out a pastoral letter to the entire membership on the average of five times a year, 42% of the ministers perform all the necessary secretarial chores themselves. Not unrelated to this is the fact that 58% admitted they never get around to their own personal correspondence. Much more serious is the fact that 78% of the ministers, when asked to check a list of constant administrative problems checked "neglected areas of work." In many churches it appears that office work itself is enough to keep the minister out of circulation, and out of communication with his people. Some benefit might come if while he

was at work in the office he had the support of other professional or responsible persons, with whom problems could be talked out, but fully 58% of the ministers in this study work alone. Ten percent more have some secretarial help, while 8% have some professional assistance, such as a student. A rare minority of twelve ministers have both secretarial and professional help. When the ministers were asked who regularly helped them to make important decisions, 40% answered "usually nobody."

Here is part of the predicament of the modern minister, caught in the mounting cycle of supply and demand, attempting to supply the demand, but failing because he is so often alone. This failure is costly to the church, first, because demand is not supplied, and second, because the ministry has been mortgaged in the attempt. It is a crucial problem of communication because the role of the principal communicator has been compromised and blocked.

The Problem of Selectivity

From the beginning of the Church it has been a distinguishing and authentic mark that it was open to all. It was part of the great contribution of the Church to create true community among those who entered into fellowship, in sharp contrast to the provincialism and prejudice which characterized other racial, religious, and national groups. Part of the testimony of the Church to its gospel has been an inclusive fellowship based upon spiritual rather than temporal or physical things. Persons of all occupational groups, all ages and backgrounds were brought together by a common concern and a common loyalty. Within the Christian community benevolent concern was first organized into care

of the poor, the suffering, the ill and the neglected. In the Christian community women first took places of responsibility beside men, and were respected for their individual worth and ability. In the Church children were welcomed into fellowship, made examples, and appreciated for their virtues. From the Church, missionaries first moved out across the known world to take the good news of the gospel "to all creatures", denying the existence of barriers of status, language,and race. Apostolic letters gave counsel to the members of far-flung churches on the need for unity and suggested techniques for bringing harmony out of chaos in these new-style communities of Christ.

The creation of this special community is an act of courageous defiance against the natural inclinations of man, and often against the grain of the larger community. Persons tend to keep close to their relatives and friends, to their racial or cultural group, seldom straying beyond the borders of their own private world. It is sometimes a superhuman effort to break through the language barriers which divide continents and cultures, and a feat of endurance to live in a strange climate among suspicious persons in the cause of world friendship and peace. Efforts to build community among the diverse peoples of the world, like the effort to build understanding between hostile factions of a church are both difficult because they require man to rise above his inclinations to the higher destiny of the family of God.

To stand in the currents of public opinion advocating the larger community envisioned by Christ, and to remain standing, is always the

task of the Christian leader, whose own life is a model for those around him, and whose own voice must be heard above the noise and babel of the times. His responsibility is two fold: to speak and remind his people of the community which God wills, and to work toward the establishment of such a community within the Church. In fulfiling both responsibilities his life will be more important than his words.

It is an essential matter, therefore, who the minister knows, to whom he speaks, what types of people come to church, and how well they relate to one another after they arrive. Is the minister at ease among all classes of people representing every occupation? Does his behavior reflect the truth of the gospel that men can find deeper grounds for relationship and thus undercut superficial barriers? Has the minister lost touch with youth or lost interest in the aged? Such predispositions and prejudices can prevent the creation of Christian community by cutting the life line, communication. They are to be feared more because they tend to work underground, beyond our awareness.

A number of predispositions or selective factors seem to be in operation determining the persons we normally communicate with. Ministers communicate more with men than women, in spite of the numerical predominance of women in the churches. Age makes a difference also, the tendency being to communicate more with persons our own age and to neglect children and youth. Married persons receive three and four times as much attention as single persons. Conversation to insiders on weekdays is 77% with those rated "frequent worshippers", and with a large number of church workers and leaders. With outsiders conversation is directed 52% of the time to community leaders, only 35% of the time to strangers.

Along the occupational dimension, relationships appear to follow white collar lines. Housewives, professionals, clerical and sales workers, managers, retired persons and students account for 80% of all communication. Within the church there is a greater proportion of communication with non white collar laborers, this group accounting for a full 20%.

Also important in determining communication are the effects of liking or not liking a person, and pressure of time. Figures 15-18 and Tables 7-8 indicate that our communications of a personal nature can quite often be predicted with reference to these two factors. High degree of liking account for most communication, low degrees of liking for almost none. In the entire group of 700 cases (weekday face-to-face conversations), only 45 persons received a low-liking rating. This does not prove that difficult and hostile persons are avoided, but it raises the question and lends credence to such an assumption. It is, after all, not a very large assumption to make. Few people go out of their way to communicate with those who annoy them. It would be no surprise, therefore, if the fifty parish ministers, having more than enough to occupy their time and minds, did not go looking for the people they dislike. That would be only human.

The problem which the ministers and churches face is the problem of transcending the usual human inclinations, of rising above whatever selective factors may be operating to demonstrate the relevance of the Good News by developing a true Christian community. Persons who are hostile are "problems" the world over, and no less in the Church, but it is the Church which has the burden of proving how such problems can be

relieved. Nothing may be more urgent for the Church to demonstrate in the modern world than just this, that the difficult, the annoying person, whose human relations have fractured and left him isolated, may be healed and restored to community. In this respect communication may be the vital key to the problem, if it becomes communication beyond bias.

The Problem of Superficiality

Another crucial problem of communication derives from two polar needs in the Church which might be termed the intensive and extensive needs. In holding a large number of people together in some sense of community, modern ministers turn naturally to various forms of mass media. With these media information is disseminated broadly among the members and friends of the parish; they have a certain durability and may last several weeks in the homes of the faithful. On the other hand, there is the demand for more intensive personal work which takes more time.

One glance at Figures 5 and 6 reveals how sharp this conflict can become. The cheapest means of communication in point of time are the means by which most persons are contacted. The most expensive means in time are limited to the least number of people. Taking the weekday communications alone, which are more characteristic than the Sunday patterns, we find that 55% of all contacts are under four minutes in duration. Does this mean that our work is superficial?

Tabulations made of subject matter indicate that much of the time spent in communication is devoted to business. Although

this is made less objectionable by the presence of an equal amount of personal-type pastoral communication, this personal subject matter is frequently superficial and passing. Discussion of religious ideas and the application of these religious ideas to specific life situations is extremely rare. Even the Sunday morning sermons are robbed of much of their value because there is rarely any time when they are discussed. About as close as most pastors ever get to discussion of sermon materials is a succession of favorable or unfavorable flashes which stream by as he stands at the door. There is no real discussion of sermon material at any time.

The extensive dimension seems rather well tended in the churches. Attention has previously been called to the large percentage of churches which publish information of various kinds through parish letters, church newspaper, or weekly bulletin. Eighty-four percent of the churches have duplicating machines of some kind, and they keep them in use regularly. Newspaper releases are carefully planned, fully 80% of the churches having some definite arrangement of responsibility and weekly schedule for this to be done.

Certain familiar routines help to guarantee broad coverage and acquaintance in the parish. Most ministers, for example, are in circulation before , during and after the Sunday School hour. After worship, virtually all the ministers take a position near the door to see personally all who care to exchange greetings. This is frequently the occasion for the passing of important information to be acted upon later. Likewise, the minister makes many brief contacts with persons who are attending

organizational affairs, or with those who gather before and after committee meetings. All of these contacts, however, regardless of their positive contribution to communication as a whole, are lacking in depth. They satisfy extensive needs but not the intensive.

It is harder to find illustrations of work being done in the intensive dimension. Pastoral calling is the practice of visiting church-connected families at home. It is an effort in the direction of depth since it meets people in the security of their own homes, in a personal face-to-face relationship which lasts long enough to permit getting beyond the usual social chatter associated with brief contacts. Seventy percent of the ministers registered a feeling of general satisfaction with pastoral calling, 38% reporting regular success in reaching serious levels of conversation. Another 30% remain perplexed, critical, and mainly dissatisfied with pastoral calling because it does not move beyond talk of trivial things. Pastoral calls made during the period of this study took an average of 25 minutes. The average number of pastoral calls made per minister in the previous year was 670, in a range from 10 to 2,000 calls.

Counseling is another approach in the intensive dimension. This counseling is not usually formal in the sense of office hours and facilities, a series of appointments and interviews an hour long. Fifty percent of the ministers have two or more sessions for pre-marital counseling, almost 60% reach levels of subject matter including sex and birth control. Nearly all replied affirmatively to the question "Do your parishoners generally come to you with personal problems?", and 54% reported counseling cases in progress at the time. Only six ministers have regular counseling

hours, and three of these do formal counseling in a Pastoral Counseling Center established by the Council of Churches and Ministerial Fellowship.

In all this counseling work the fifty ministers of the area frequently turn to others for special help, a high percentage of the group reporting having made referrals in the last year to a physician, (64%), psychiatrist, (48%), a pastoral counselor, (56%), social worker, (56%), or lawyer, (54%). Sixty percent of the ministers were able to give the name of some psychiatrist in the city.

Spiritual direction, which in centuries past was more characteristic of the ministry, is today virtually unknown. This ancient practice of giving personal supervision and guidance in spiritual exercises and devotional practices is now carried on almost entirely in prayer meetings or study groups. Twenty percent reported this activity.

Pastoral care is conscientiously administered in regular visits to the hospital two or three times a week in normal cases, and in the care of the bereaved. Seventy-two percent make it a point to make two face-to-face calls before a funeral, and 84% report a regular system of follow up in a few days' time after the funeral.

Teaching opportunities come weekly for 30% of the ministers, and for the others only seasonally. Lent is the most common time for confirmation and membership classes, and the ministers almost always assume the position of teacher.

Participation in committees may also draw the minister into intensive relationships of communication. Often in the course of a committee's work attitudes and emotions come to the surface, disagreements must be

ironed out, and realistic solutions found which reflect the true situation in the group. Insofar as the minister participates in this process in a constructive and insightful way, it presents him with an unusual opportunity for communication, and with some of the advantages of greater numbers.

Depth or superficiality? There are possibilities for both in every parish? Is it better to make two home visits or six telephone calls? Will six letters do more good than one counseling session? Would three days in the office on behalf of the church newspaper be better spent than three days of preparation for a study group? There are no magic formulas for success, no sure sign of failure but the unreality of extremes. Valid decisions will be relevant to the needs of the parish as a whole, but no less of the individual person. The danger lies in failing to see what can happen if the tension between these two poles is lost. The more familiar temptation of our time, however, does not seem to lie in the direction of too much depth, but too much superficiality.

The Problem of Sensitivity

The discovery that communication is a two way proposition is not always recognized, or if recognized not always practiced. There are two equally demanding dimensions, sending and receiving, and each has its peculiar problems. Skill in one does not necessarily mean skill in the other.

Receiving and sending have complementary functions and are indispensable to each other. What comes in has a vital effect on what goes out. Incoming information, like military intelligence, directs conversation

one way or another, and may indicate the need for a shift in emphasis or a change in subject matter. This "feedback" by way of receptors keeps the communication relevant and timely, and determines its depth and significance. Receiving and sending functions thus overlap, and if properly developed may operate instantaneously.

More often it is the function of receiving which is neglected. We are better talkers than listeners, because we need no special code to understand our own language and thought forms. To understand the communications of others, however, we need a very thorough system of decoding to translate their language and values into our own. Because of the extra labor involved in this process, we stop listening when we get tired. As a debate wears on, one turns more and more to the presentation of his own case to the audience, without hearing carefully all that the opposition is saying. Personal arguments similarly break down sooner or later into two monologues, each person waiting for the other to get through so he can talk again.

A critical factor in the breakdown of communication is anxiety, a state of mounting tension and nervousness which seems to raise particular havoc with reception. When suffering from anxiety it is as if we do not hear; we stand woodenly and go through all the motions, but lack contact and involvement. Communication becomes superficial and disjointed. Like a pedestrian waiting at a busy street corner, we must wait for traffic to stop moving before venturing forth. The person who is absorbed in his own problems cannot enter into the problems of others, any more than the busy executive who does not have time to talk, would be able to listen

properly even if he took time. The importance of this fact has been appreciated in management circles in recent years and has hastened the creation of new executive positions designed to take pressure off top managerial talent. The man at the top is thus freed from smaller anxieties in order to maintain his creative approach to larger problems.

Business and industrial organizations have also been alerted to pay more attention to trends in public opinion, and especially criticism. In hierarchical organizations one needs to have a keen sensitivity to criticism or else it is overlooked. Some executives are now aware that criticism does not flow upward to them, but instead has a marked tendency to travel downward. The boss is criticised in the wash room but never in his office. If the boss is to receive critical information he will have to develop extra skill in reception. He will have to learn to perceive the presence of criticism even though no one puts it in words.

All such considerations are germane to the common problems of communication in the parish. The minister may be too busy and distracted with little things to hear what his parishioners are saying. Among our group 56% are aware of constant overcrowding in the schedule, and 60% are worried because "too many things depend upon me". Administrative duties may keep the minister so far from the homes of his people that his outgoing communications may begin to show this deficit in understanding. If he is too wrapped up in the presentation of his "case" to carry on receptive functions, he may gallop far beyond the interest and patience of his audience. Again, he may be an overloaded top executive too frustrated by small anxieties to direct with creative energy the total

life of the parish. More than half of the men in our study take no time off each week, as few as seven of them taking a whole day.

Ministers are notably relieved of direct criticism. Not that there is general satisfaction about his performance, but his position makes criticism unlikely. When he errs, the criticism flows around among members of the congregation but not upward to the minister himself. He makes too good a friend and confidant to risk offending. In the communications of the fifty Protestant parish ministers of Greater Lynn, some 2600 communications in all, there were only four personal criticisms which flowed directly up to the minister! If he is to receive information of this kind, then, he cannot wait for it to come, he must enter into <u>all</u> communication with keener sensitivity and an ability to ferret out what is not easily verbalized.

The minister will need to listen not only in the hope of learning how to improve his own behavior but of gaining real understanding of the lives of others. People never say all that they mean in the first breath. Meaning unfolds by a process of communication. If sensitivity is lacking, meaning never unfolds, relationships are undefined, and communication is superficial. Sensitive reception is thus prerequisite to significant sending.

It may be equally important for the minister to receive communication from the world outside the immediate sphere of his daily problems. How often does he refresh himself with material from radio, television, and reading matter? In the geographical area of this study religious television

is not frequently available, but there are some ministers who watch carefully for it. The great majority (92%), however, view religious television rarely or never. Religious radio programs get a wider hearing but 56% of the ministers still report listening only occasionally, rarely, or never.

Reading is more voluminous among the graduate students in the group, students reported an average of 10 books read through in the previous month, compared with an average of 3 for the full-time group. Periodical reading is the most popular form of reading matter, an average of eight periodicals being perused regularly by each minister. Next to the denominational and professional periodicals, the Reader's Digest is most read, by 72% of the ministers, followed by LIFE magazine which is read by 52%.

Sometimes the minister is literally "not there" to receive incoming communications. Eighty percent of the ministers said they were most available for communication in the morning. They are simply not there in the afternoon and evenings. A number reported that mealtimes were the only times they could count on receiving communication, yet a less opportune time could hardly be imagined. Who answers the phone and takes messages when the minister is out? The wives do, 76% of the time. Ten percent of the time there is nobody to take messages and answer the telephone. What is more serious from the standpoint of the difficulty of reaching the ministers is the fact that the wives are almost never in a position to make an appointment for people with their husbands, as a secretary might do. Callers are therefore put off until a later time when the minister may or may not be home as he had planned. Fully 70% of the men report a

problem in the matter of hearing directly from the families who need their services. This extremely bad situation is apparently corrected through the efforts of other church families, since 74% of the ministers report that the information does reach them in this way.

A special problem which bears on the problem of sensitivity is the problem created by Sunday. The "shape of Sunday" is definitely different for the minister, and constitutes a great demand upon his physical and nervous energy. We have shown how substantive communication doubles on this day, and that in addition there are many more brief contacts with people to add to the confusion. Knowing that they are sure to find the minister at church on Sunday morning, countless parishioners save up odds and ends of business left over from the week to take up with him at this time. Although Sunday morning is the most opportune time for them, it is the least opportune time for the minister. Sunday stands out from the other days as the day of concentration upon spiritual things, which is the heart of the church's program. For this occasion the minister spends difficult hours in preparation, often staying up past his usual bedtime on Saturday night to bring all to completion.

When Sunday comes, however, it is more hectic from the standpoint of church business than any of the weekdays. Religious conversation with people actually falls off in favor of a surge of administrative, organizational, and personal interests. Before entering the sanctuary to lead worship and preach to his congregation the average minister has had the benefit of 24 minutes of relative privacy, 44% of them having none whatever.

After the emotional and intellectual effort of leading one or more services he is faced with another half hour or more of rapid conversation in which people pass him vital information and try to do their business, The result of this overload is a host of lost details, distractions, overstrain, and general perversion of the Sabbath. Seventy-four percent of the ministers report that Sunday is more tiring than other days. When first questioned about their adjustments and preparations for this strain, most ministers were at a loss to name any. Specific probing into their usual behavior on Saturday and Sunday, however, clearly indicates a pattern of adjustment to stress. Fully 84% of the ministers make special preparation for Sunday by taking some time off on Saturday, staying home Saturday night, retiring early, or by other means. Likewise 84% also indulge in some method of recovery on Sunday afternoon, by avoiding all routine work, napping, recreation, family trips, reading the newspapers, watching television, or some other informal and relaxing activity.

Critical Summary

The inability of the minister to specialize to some extent, in accord with his individual talents, training, and interests and so fulfill his calling, is fundamentally disruptive. Since more than anything else, the sense of satisfaction derived from the fulfillment of his calling is the very thing which keeps the minister going, against all normal odds and difficulties, a failure at this point is critical and fundamental. Some of our data indicate that at least one half of the minister's communication falls into a non-professional category (Table 2). Others indicate the heavy predominance of administrative subject matter and of personal talk without reference to religion, coupled with an almost

complete neglect of ideas arising from sermons and classes (Figures 1-4). One could easily speculate on the reactions of the clergy to this situation in the parish. Undoubtedly such frustrations have gone a long way toward driving persons out of the ministry and creating the atmosphere of dissatisfaction to which a host of articles have been addressing themselves in the past few years. As for the fifty parish ministers in this study, 62% stated that they were generally happy with their present combination of roles. That as many as 38% should reply in the negative is direct confirmation of dissatisfaction with the vocation of the ministry as it is practiced in today's parish. When asked "What would you like to do less of?", fully 92% of the men cited administrative and organizational chores of a non-professional nature. Their answers to the question "What would you like to do more of?" indicate the direction of their strivings for vocational fulfillment, and perhaps show us the trend into the future. Almost 60% mentioned pastoral functions like counseling and pastoral calling in the home, 24% mentioned teaching functions, and 20% mentioned their desire for more study and preparation for preaching.

We have seen that supplying all the various demands of the modern parish may result in the mortgaging of the more professional aspects of the ministry in order to give non-professional or semi-professional services. Preaching, pastoral care, teaching, and spiritual oversight are specialized functions for which the minister is specifically prepared by arduous college and seminary training. They constitute the hard core of his profession. A host of administrative and organizational tasks, however, could be performed equally well or better by others. The true

exercise of administrative oversight, which fell to the bishop or senior minister in the New Testament Church, has been largely passed over in the modern parish, the major portion of administrative time being taken by secretarial and executive duties. Few ministers appear to engage in long-range planning, evaluation, creative programming, and general supervision; instead they are tieing loose ends left by others, promoting, publicizing, purchasing, presiding, and generally becoming over-involved in the execution of every project instead of its supervision. Instead of overseeing the workings of the congregation with an eye to its policies, objective, failures and successes, our ministers are absorbed as office workers, record keepers, stenographers, and calendar keepers too much of the time. Skill in typing and mimeographing - only two could not type and four could not use a mimeograph machine - are essential to and characteristic of the modern parish ministry.

Enormous growth in the committee and group structure of the Church may be a sign of hope, but in too many cases, this activity has become one of the parish minister's most trying problems. While suggesting a favorable trend toward decentralization of authority and administration, the towering superstructure of committees may be held aloft only by the flying buttress of the minister himself. Our data show that each minister has about 22 committees to deal with regularly. But more distressing than the number of separate activities to be integrated is the type of involvement in these committees. In about one fourth of them the minister is the presiding officer and chairman. Ten out of 22 are

described as "depending heavily" upon him, and 11 out of 22 involve a regular assignment or duty. Only 1/2 of the committees and groups are considered self-sufficient and quite able to do their work well without any help from the minister. Another 1/2 are committees outside the local church. In churches where the committee structure is not matched by a team of competent lay leaders and workers, it is only one more imposing source of anxiety for the pastor, upon whom it dumps its unfinished business month after month. What has become of the protestant principle of the priesthood of all believers? How can the church marshall its resources to meet the demand?

Counseling activities and pastoral visitation in home and hospital are notable exceptions to a threatening trend to brief and superficial communication activity. At the time of interviewing 54% of the ministers said they were presently engaged in counseling with someone. Counseling interviews from our daily study averaged a respectable 49 minutes each. But in contrast to such depth relationships are the large number of very brief contacts, 55% of the total communication on weekdays limited to three and four minutes. General absorption in the preparation of mass media must also be regarded as impersonal and superficial to a great extent. Teaching engages the efforts of only 30% of the ministers on a regular weekly basis. Superficiality is a growing temptation in an age of mass media, when commercial cliches and stereotypes lead to de-personalization and the thinning out of human relationships. If the spiritual leader of the Christian Church is to be a model and indicate a corrective trend in modern life, he will need to be a leader in depth rather than superficiality. While others

deal in stereotypes which do violence to the integrity of the individual, manipulating him for their own ends, as a thing rather than a person, the minister ought to bear witness to the concept of the individual person sacred to the Judeo-Christian tradition, stated so well by Martin Buber in his little volume I and Thou.[1] It is the particular vocation of the church pastor to enter into a profound and creative encounter with persons, below the level of show and sham, for the purpose of realistic inventory of their behavior and insightful reallignment of life goals. If this type of communication is not available, then it is the parishioner who pays the price by going without.

The problem of sensitivity is a related problem. Again it is the parishioner who pays the greatest price. Is it not the sensitivity of the Christian pastor which puts the plus quality into pastoral relations? Parishioners look to their pastors for patient listening, personal understanding, and insightful responses. Though others are too busy to be bothered, or charge too much for their time, parishioners have a right to expect their pastors to have time to care about and to understand them. The very depth of relationship which is so desirable, hinges rather directly upon whether the minister can maintain considerable freedom from encumbrances and overscheduling, in order to have time for people when they need him, and space in his mind for the consideration of their distresses. The pastor who has bogged down in the incoming tide of administrative affairs, continually anxious about the

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[1]Martin Buber, I and Thou, trans. Ronald G. Smith, (T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1937).

hopelessness and urgency of his many responsibilities, is largely disqualified from pastoral service because he has become de-sensitized to incoming communication. Blocked as a receiver of communication, he becomes incapable as a sender.

The problem of selectivity or bias is not so much a difficulty of reception as it is a difficulty of transmission. Our outgoing communications are not what we expect, and conflict with our intentions. By limiting our communications to persons of a particular occupational class, marital status, age, and affability, we may be creating an incomplete fellowship in denial of underlying spiritual principles. Being incomplete, it cannot communicate or demonstrate wholeness to a divided world, and falls short of the church's mission. Furthermore, our inability to rise above prejudice and bias draws a gap between our professions and our practices reducing the Church to the level of the surrounding culture.

CHAPTER VII

A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Problems and Persons

In Chapters IV and V the major research findings were presented following the dimensions of subject matter, means, personal channels, and motives of communication. On the basis of this information, a number of questions might be raised. What has become of religion in the minister's conversation? Why is Sunday communication the same as on other days? Is it possible that communication with outsiders is so little different in quality from that with insiders? And why do so many of the minister's communications fall into the category of semi- or non-professional functions?

In Chapter VI we moved on to the formulation of five crucial problems drawing upon the evidence of day to day communication and upon corroborating data from the interviews. These problems of specialization, supply and demand, superficiality, selectivity, and sensitivity were critically examined and their importance to the ministry and the Church evaluated. It remains for us in this chapter to consider how to achieve a Christian solution of the problems which have been found. In doing this, prominence will be given to psychological considerations, while drawing further upon the primary and secondary data of the study.

To rest easily in the presence of the five problems of communication

which were outlined in the last chapter is impossible for anyone who cares about the ministry and the Church. The illnesses which have been asserted to exist are serious illnesses affecting the vital nerve centers of the Church. The problems of specialization and supply and demand call attention to basic distortion of the traditional concepts of pastoral oversight and the priesthood of all believers, emptying the ministry of much of its ancient meaning and leaving the modern minister with a sense of vocational failure. The problems of superficiality and sensitivity result in a loss of profound and personal relationships with parishioners, leading to de-personalization, irrelevance, and ineffectiveness. Selectivity problems, often stemming from unconscious personal preferences, lead to the formation of incomplete communities of the faithful in contradiction to New Testament principles, and compromising the historic mission of the Church.

These problems cover a lot of ground, yet they do not constitute a complete statement of the difficulties made manifest in this study of daily communication. Not just a few Christian principles have been compromised. Expedience is a common guide in the challenging cross-currents of parish life, momentary values being seized more readily than long-range values, and personal values in conflict with administrative values.

One of the greatest costs to the Church, resulting from various breakdowns in communication, may be the cost of neglect, a full 78% of the ministers interviewed citing "neglected areas of work" as a constant administrative problem. Other costs are those of lost opportunities and wasted resources, 46% of the ministers reporting a constant backlog

of unanswered correspondence, and 54% concerned about printed matter they never get to. That the minister should bog down in secretarial work or be involved half the time in non-professional type communications, indicates profligate waste of the Church's most expensive single asset.

The need is everywhere apparent for a program of communication which goes deeper than expedience and which moves with creative thrust through the usual difficulties and hazards better perpared to meet the unequalled opportunities of the day. In a country where freedom of communication abounds, and where Protestantism has a natural environment for development, local churches have a depressing similarity of program and approach, relieved too rarely by wise experimentation and timely reorganization of effort. Yet behind the Church facade, more often than not, is a creative minister, well prepared for his spiritual duties, abreast of the times, and with original ideas up his sleeve that seldom come out. The problem is not so much a problem of resources, as a problem of organization and strategy. But what strategy?

Since problems are created by persons, rather than by social forces, and change may be expected in the social order only when a change is wrought by persons, we begin our formulation of a communication strategy with a consideration of the central person of this study, the parish minister.

The Person At The Center

All communication in the Church is not the minister's, but more than any other single person the minister is at the hub of the wheel. He is a principle locus of communication, and in many ways his communica-

tions may be the model or prototype for the parish as a whole. His words are important.

Any reform in the Church today will depend, as always, upon the people of the churches as they respond to the leadership of their pastors. It would be unfair to expect success from the efforts of pastors or parishioners working alone. However, if either responsibility is more primary it would seem to be the pastor's. If a trend is to be reversed, it will be reversed by those with the strongest motives and the greatest concern; presumably, the pastors. Furthermore, it seems improbable that reform can be instituted through general appeals or be reference to the social pressures of the time. A more likely prospect of success may be found in the local pastor who assumes full responsibility for the direction of his own life, and the life of his parish. It will be his responsibility to communicate to his people the vital information which they need, and to engage with them in fruitful dialogue regarding the Church's mission. This was part of the original function of the bishop-overseer or senior minister of the first century parish. The minister at the head of every congregation has a fundamental obligation to direct it.

Psychologists will understand the tendency of overanxious pastors to gravitate to tasks of a routine nature, which can be accomplished without the usual frustration and demands made by counseling, home and hospital calling, sermon preparation, and presiding over the Official Board. Pastors who work a seventy hour week as a regular thing, take little time off (48% of them do), observe no full Sabbath (14% do), and

are constantly interrupted in what they are doing (74%), are probably glad to slip into the office for a little mimeograph work. It would be a break. In today's churches this type of escape is a dignified one, owing to the awe which attaches to all forms of mass media. The only unfortunate feature is that the pastoral mimeographer discourages reform instead of encouraging it! Mimeographing is no better solution to the minister's problems than working all the time. Neither approach reaches causal factors.

One well-recognized causal factor in all behavior is the effect of the social group upon the individual. The expectations of the minister's social group, the parish, inevitably play a part in his decisions. There are times when secretarial work must be done, just to prevent further damage and embarrassment. Supplies must be purchased in advance, official letters must go out, deadlines are reached and must be faced, with or without help. Naturally he does not want to be blamed--in the annoying indirect way that ministers are usually criticised--because the Lenten schedule is not mailed until Palm Sunday, or the church newsletter brought publicity for activities which had already been held. He picks up all the loose ends he finds, because he has a natural desire to please his people and be accepted by them. Here is a causal factor for the minister to reckon with, and to assess in the total economy of his life. How much disapproval can he stand in striving toward the fulfillment of his vocational committments? How creative and successful can he be in interpreting his vocational goals, and in winning for them the approval of the church?

Even more to be reckoned with may be the attitudes and motives of

the pastor himself. What does he expect of himself and others? If he compulsively assumes the obligations of others, and demands perfection in the completion of all his duties, then any mercy extended by the congregation will bring little relief. If he thinks it may be possible to complete all his duties, and that all the duties are his, then he is poisoned by his own hand. Groomed in a church where the minister does everything, and trained to do nearly everything by his college and seminary, the capable graduate, in a burst of youthful energy, may assume that he should do everything, and actually try it. In school, one tries to learn all the answers, if not literally then figuratively, and the temptation is great to take on an exalted role in the local church as the person who knows everything.

In all such considerations the Messianic complex looms in the background. Assumptions are frequently made that the minister should know everything in the Bible, answer any questions brought to him about church history, have the latest information about equipment for the primary department, the price of Bibles sold by the denominational publishing house, and make clear pronouncements on church rules and regulations at the drop of a hat. The minister has to decide whether he will play this impossible role, with whatever gratifications accompany it, or whether he will not. The Messiah has answers for all questions, solutions for all problems, makes up every deficit by the exercise of his own ability, and he has a considerable reward in the accolades of the people. Again the pastor will have to decide whether he will be true to himself, or to the Messianic desires of others.

Messianic complex or not, every parish minister will have to decide upon his own spheres of activity and competence, and on the basis of sound convictions channel and direct his energies. There are a dozen reasons why a pastor may be temporarily distracted and devoted to the wrong duties, but there is no reason why this condition should be permanent unless it satisfies a need or reflects his real motive.

The ministers of this study have a healthy variety of interests and abilities. Some types of communication satisfy them more than others. Some have too much administration to suit them, a few want more. Most of them feel they are too deep in church finance, while some wish they had more of a part in it. They find pastoral duties hardest and most exhausting of all their work, yet 58% of them are eager to expand their pastoral activities. Some ministers teach classes four and five times a week and want to do less, while 24% of them want to do more teaching.

All ministers have special interests and abilities, and all have limitations. These special abilities coupled with their special attitudes and personalities are what make them attractive and valuable to their churches. Yet the setting of limits and the delegation of responsibility is still on the conservative side. Messianic pretensions are better discovered in a man's activity than in his words, all men being willing enough in conversation to admit to their limitations. But when it comes to the matter of committees, for example, many pastors appear to go off the deep end.

Each minister participates regularly in eleven committees, on the average. The range, however, is from 1 to 34 committees, some ministers

making a regular profession of their skillful and resourceful activity in these small groups, and others avoiding them as inconsistent with the principle of delegated authority. A very few ministers manage to limit themselves to two or three committees, while the popular tendency is in the other direction, to accumulate committees without forethought. It is impolite to say "no." Of the eleven committees in which ministers participate, seven of them are rated as "depending heavily" upon them, and only four can "run well without" them. Why is this? Several men act as chairman of as many as eight committees, while an equal number manage to avoid being chairman of any.

What is to be the role of the minister in committees? Policy in this field seems conspicuously absent. Shallwe multiply our opportunities for work on committees with the conviction that they provide maximum interaction for the most persons, facilitate the democratic process, and are a nexus for communication? Or on the other hand, should we keep our participation at a minimum in order to maximize the responsibility of others and keep other professional functions in focus?

In formulating such policies one fundamental issue for the minister is the old temptation to play the Messiah and to provide every committee with its bright ideas, its projects, its methods, its publicity plans, et cetera, ad infinitum, to the point where they will almost all "depend heavily" upon him. Involvements of this type will clutter his desk with assignments made by others or assumed by himself, in bewildering variety, and with the inevitable shifting of his ministry from inner-directed to outer-directed activity. His "calling" will come to mean that everyone

is calling for something, and that the ministry has temporarily taken a back seat.

The issue is personal, and unavoidable. Every pastor must come to it, and no one can decide for another. Making a sound decision will depend upon how realistically ones limitations and skills are assessed, and how well personal motives are matched with practical needs. This much is sure, the Pastor is the man at the center, and is fully responsible for his own life. He is called to direct the Church.

Multiplying the Foci of Communication

Communication strategy that begins with the pastor begins well, for he is at the hub of the wheel, an ordained communicator, with much to communicate. A strategy that ends with the pastor is incomplete and inadequate, for the minister's wheal is not the only wheel of communication. If all lines of communication converge on the minister then surely he will be caught in a web of confusion, his life distracted, his mind too full of everyone else's business to consider his own. A one wheel communication network with all lines converging upon the pastor is a reflection on the pastor's intentions and motives, and will be technically inadequate to the demands of the communicative modern parish. Real solutions lie in the direction of accepting ones limitations, withdrawing from the overambitious playing of the Messianic role, and inviting others to join in the total task of communication.

To the pastor looking for a chance to reform his communication system, the data of our study can be of immediate help. Communication demands are sufficiently patterned and predictable that some solutions

are implicit, once the principle of wheels within wheels is accepted as essential to progress. A breakdown of responsibilities and functions along professional lines would seem the natural criterion. What can the minister do because of his training and skill that others cannot do? As far as possible it would seem desirable that non-professional tasks should be taken over by those able to do them, leaving the minister more freedom and adaptability in fulfilling the more difficult aspects of his calling.

Table 3 indicates a characteristic pattern of communication through the day and suggests possible lines of organization. The morning is the peak time for telephone calls and consultations, the afternoon for visitation at home and hospital, and the evening for group and committee activities. The morning is telephone time and letter time, and the best or only time of day to reach the minister.

Furthermore we know that at least half of this communication involves the simple passing of information, and a great deal of other miscellaneous service not classifiable in the more technical categories of counsel and advice giving, spiritual guidance, or even instructions. We know that one of the greatest plagues of the minister is interruption, the very term interruption conveying the impression that the distractions are non-professional and relatively unimportant. This fact should not obscure the actual importance of such communications to those who initiate them, and the need to receive and handle them in a satisfactory way. Doubts need to be cleared up, details set straight, and people who want to talk something over with the minister deserve to get prompt attention and appointments, all within a certain general framework of action designed

to help the minister concentrate on important work at the best times.

With the promise of volunteer help in the mornings alone, the minister of the smallest parish could probably improve his ministry. This person could take over the telephone, become the minister's personal information service, make appointments when necessary, interpret to parishioners the schedule for the day, take messages and learn to direct inquiries and assignments which lie clearly within the province of official committees to those elected to perform them. In this way a vast amount of unnecessary and distracting communication can be diverted to other foci, and the total task of communication shared.

If this volunteer person can use a typewriter, then her usefulness will be even greater since there is a significant number of official letters, reports, news articles, and smaller notes to be drafted in the course of every week. There is the weekly bulletin to type and mimeograph, and a newspaper of some description to produce either weekly or monthly. In connection with these projects there should be editors and managers to further broaden the network of communication, but in the case of the weekly bulletin, this morning secretary could make a great contribution by gathering weekly notices, clearing dates and times, and calling people to fill in missing details. If such a person is not available, then in nine out of ten cases, the minister will have to do it himself.

In churches where there is no official clerk to handle inquiries about church membership and baptismal records, to say nothing of the large number of changes in address, then this person could also take

this off the minister's hands. It doesn't take seven years of advanced education to look up membership records and make out certificates, but it takes valuable time which the minister should not spend in this way.

It can be advertised among parishioners that this communication service is available mornings from 9 to 12 and that they are encouraged to use it. If it can be put into operation then the minister will have a more productive morning, relatively free from the usual distraction, and will go forth to his afternoon and evening work without a distressing load of unfinished business in his head. With other communication networks established, the minister could manage his own with greater flexibility and judgment. The price for this service would be small. It would seem unlikely that any parish in the country would be without at least one person who would be capable of this work and happy to make such a contribution to the church.

The policy of multiplying the foci of communication requires a decision with regard to groups. To bog down in the work of a dozen committees may be no better than to bog down in the work of the church office. There must be a good reason for joining a committee, and one's function in it be clearly evaluated. The hazard of overdependence is clearly to be avoided, since it means shattering the focus and losing vocational direction. Some ministers in this study incur no obligations to attend committee meetings, instead monitor or visit them briefly to keep in touch, make observations, encourage or stimulate to action, but carefully avoid becoming entangled or responsible for their projects. The brevity and the nature of such a visit militates against the possibility

of over-dependence and keeps responsibility where it belongs, on the chairman and his committee. Other ministers in this study remain almost entirely apart from the committee structure, limiting themselves to one or two executive bodies in which all groups and committees are represented, and in which he himself presides. They divert their energy from committees to groups, where they believe there is greater opportunity for communication.

Another way to multiply the foci of communication is to create a "staff" of paid workers who are given executive responsibility for certain phases of the church program. Staff will usually be occupied with established groups like the youth fellowships, Church School, or the choirs. Others provide secretarial assistance for all, and serve in the capacities outlined for the volunteer described above. The patterns of staff relationship vary with the budget and imagination of the churches. Staff arrangements in this sample of fifty ministers in an urban and suburban area are generally modest, consisting mostly of part-time secretaries, youth workers, religious educators, musicians, choir directors, day nursery and kindergarten personnel and a few full-time associate ministers, hostesses, and secretaries.

The notion is probably universal that if every church could be properly staffed then the dilemmas of the pastor would be resolved. There is a certain truth in this, since there is hardly a church of any size that could not do certain of its tasks better if it had the advantage of a specialist in charge. But what effect does a staff have upon the senior

minister? There are many theories. Will the minister who is given a secretary become more active in pastoral care than he was before? Does a secretary actually free a pastor from administration or bury him deeper? Who knows?

In this study we have sought to deepen understanding at this point. Twenty-nine ministers in this study work without any staff help at all, paid or volunteer. Twenty-one others have various kinds of staff help. Those with staff were divided into three groups, those having secretarial assistance only, those having some kind of professional service only, and those having both secretarial and professional help, either part or full-time. The number of ministers with staff, and the limited variety of staff in this sample make any dogmatic statements hazardous, but the results are very suggestive. They point to the need for further research on the relationship of staff to the function of the senior minister.

Our data yield information at two critical points, the relation of various staff resources to the ministerial main topics of conversation, and the minister's function in communication as measured by the five-category content analysis. We have thus inquired as to the various amounts of subject matter (8 categories) engaging the ministers who have no staff, secretarial staff, or professional staff. Analysis was limited to personal conversations held on weekdays. The findings are summarized in Tables 10 and 11.

The comparison of those who have no staff with those who have some

TABLE 10

THE MINISTER'S FUNCTION IN COMMUNICATION
WITH RELATION TO STAFF ASSISTANCE

STAFF ASSISTANCE	PERCENT COUNSEL, ADVICE	PERCENT INFORMATION	PERCENT INSTRUCTION	PERCENT SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE	PERCENT OTHER
NO STAFF (N = 29)	8	43	8	12	29
SECRETARIAL HELP ONLY (N = 5)	7	40	11	22	20
PROFESSIONAL HELP ONLY (N = 4)	7	64	5	12	12
SECRETARIAL AND PROFESSIONAL HELP (N = 12)	11	51	8	9	21
ANY STAFF HELP (N = 21)	9	50	8	13	20

is based on a sample of 29 ministers who have none, and 21 who have some, enough to give a reliable picture of differences. Noting the first and last columns of Table 10 we find some rather striking similarities. Ministers engage in giving counsel and advice, in giving instructions, and in providing spiritual guidance in the same proportions, regardless of the presence of staff. The primary purpose of personal weekday communications is listed as giving counsel about 8% of the time, giving instructions about 8% of the time, and providing spiritual guidance about 12% of the time, these proportions remaining the same for ministers with and without staff help.

The only real differences between staff and no-staff groups of ministers appear at the points of miscellaneous service and information service. Since there are no changes of note elsewhere it appears that the minister with staff graduates from miscellaneous functions to the task of passing information. About 7% of his total communications are involved in this shift.

Considerations of the effect of specific types of staff upon the communication function of the minister are necessarily more speculative, but nevertheless suggestive. Limiting comment to the larger differences, we find that there is a slight increase of counsel and advice for ministers with larger staffs, and a slight decrease in spiritual guidance for the same group. Ministers with the largest staffs also show the same general trend from miscellaneous services to more definite information services as noted above. This trend is most dramatic in the case of ministers who have professional staff only. Ministers with secretarial help alone, appear to

TABLE 11

ORIGINAL TOPICS OF CONVERSATION ON WEEKDAYS
WITH RELATION TO STAFF ASSISTANCE

STAFF ASSISTANCE	PERCENT ADMINISTRATIVE TOPICS	PERCENT ORGANIZATIONAL TOPICS	PERCENT PERSONAL TOPICS	PERCENT RELIGIOUS TOPICS	PERCENT GENERAL TOPICS	PERCENT PRIESTLY TOPICS	PERCENT SERMON TOPICS	PERCENT CLASS TOPICS
NO STAFF (N = 29)	45	7	27	2	16	3	0	0
SECRETARIAL ONLY (N = 5)	30	8	35	3	16	5	2	1
PROFESSIONAL ONLY (N = 4)	42	12	28	4	8	5	1	0
BOTH (N = 12)	44	13	29	0	7	4	0	3
ANY STAFF (N = 21)	40	11	30	2	10	4	1	2

do quite a bit better on spiritual guidance, but proof of this will have to await further confirmation by research.

Turning attention from the minister's function in communication to the contents of his communication we find other differences. What might be the effect of various staff situations upon the main topics of ministerial communication? To find an answer to this question tabulations have been made for the five categories of staff, indicating the main topics of weekday conversation found among them. Table 11 contains this information. Reading from left to right, the percentage of communications originated in each subject area is given for each staff group.

Close similarity in the realm of religious conversation is again indicated for all staff groups. Religious topics developed in pastoral situations, priestly topics, and the discussion of sermon and class material occur in the minister's conversation in the same proportions regardless of staff.

Administrative topics originate communication least often among ministers with secretaries and most often among ministers with no staff at all. Organizational topics increase steadily with the addition of staff, from a low of 7% of total for ministers with no help to a high of 13% for ministers with both secretarial and professional help.

Ministers with no staff originate communication to discuss personal matters least often (27% of total) and ministers with secretarial staff most often (35% of total). Ministers initiate conversation less often for the purpose of general talk as staff increases beyond a secretary.

Generally speaking, it appears to hold true that secretarial assistance may effect a release from as much as 15% of the administrative conversation, and an increase of as much as 8% in pastoral communication of a personal nature. The addition of professional staff only, may be accompanied by a decrease in general conversation (8% less) and an increase in organizational conversation (5% more), a trend which is also found among ministers with larger staffs.

It seems justified to assert that the changes accountable to these staff variables are very modest in contrast to our expectations. The addition of staff will not produce a pastoral minister or a spiritual guide. The addition of a secretary seems to make a direct contribution to the minister in the area of administrative subject matter and may be responsible for an increase in personal communication. Beyond this, however, it appears that additional staff relationships do not confer large benefits upon the minister who enjoys them, so far as his own communications are concerned. The contribution of other staff members may be viewed as a contribution to the church more than to the senior minister himself, since their presence will constitute a challenge to him to maintain his own personal contacts and push forward rather than backward in religious conversation. The addition of staff is thus an occupational hazard for the senior minister who must buck the tendency to deal with people more in organizational than in personal terms, and to hold back a rising tide of administrative communications. Staff, however, if properly organized, will constitute an advantage to the minister and the church, through the establishment of additional wheels of communication with themselves at the center.

To probe still deeper into the meaning of larger frames of communication, we have studied the relationship of the minister's topics of communication and the size of his church. The size of a church in membership may be assumed to have some influence upon the volume or character of the minister's communications. But what influence? Do ministers in larger churches communicate with more people than ministers of smaller churches? What happens to the subject matter of conversation in the large church? Does the small church minister engage in more personal communication than his colleague in the large church? And what becomes of administrative subject matter; does it go up or down in volume with the size of the church?

Table 12 helps to answer these questions. The fifty ministers of the study were placed in rank order by the size of their churches in membership and divided into four nearly equal groups representing a range in membership from 24 to 5,000 persons. The total number of conversation topics were then tabulated for each quartile and percentages calculated to indicate the proportion of total conversation within each quartile devoted to the eight subject matter areas.

It appears to be true that ministers of the largest churches talk to more people (10%) and cover more topics in conversation (9%) than the ministers of the smallest churches.[1] This relationship of volume of communication to church size is not consistent, however, since ministers of next largest churches actually engage in the least conversation. Considering upper and lower halves, the difference in volume is negligible, ministers of

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[1] Table 13, page 188.

TABLE 12

ALL TOPICS OF CONVERSATION WITH RELATION TO CHURCH SIZE

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP SIZE	PERCENT ADMINISTRATIVE TOPICS	PERCENT ORGANIZATIONAL TOPICS	PERCENT PERSONAL TOPICS	PERCENT RELIGIOUS TOPICS	PERCENT GENERAL TOPICS	PERCENT PRIESTLY TOPICS	PERCENT SERMON TOPICS	PERCENT CLASS TOPICS
SIZE A AVERAGE 88 (N = 12)	29	11	30	3	16	7	3	1
SIZE B AVERAGE 230 (N = 13)	32	11	29	3	16	6	2	1
SIZE C AVERAGE 452 (N = 12)	36	13	22	2	19	6	1	1
SIZE D AVERAGE 1230 (N = 13)	28	12	33	3	12	8	2	2

smaller churches accounting for 48% of the total interaction and their large church colleagues for 52%. Making the same comparison for the total number of conversation topics it appears that ministers of larger churches are 6% more voluble. The small differences in these groups are negligible in comparison with the much larger differences in the size of the churches, which range from an average of 88 members in the smallest churches (first quartile) to an average of 1230 members in the largest (fourth quartile).

Shifting attention from volume and volubility to the actual subject matter of communication, we find only small exceptions to a general picture of similarity for ministers of various size churches. The volume of organizational, religious, priestly, sermon and class topics is virtually the same for all ministers, regardless of the size of their churches. When it comes to administrative subject matter there is a steady increase in volume through the first three quartiles to a high of 36%, ended by a sharp decline to only 28% in the largest churches, a change which may be traced to the type of staff workers employed by these large churches. At the same time there is a steady loss of personal communication through the first three quartiles, ended by a sharp rise of 10% in the same large churches, perhaps traceable to the same source. It would thus appear that if proper staff arrangements were not made in churches with more than 600 members, the steadily worsening situation of less personal and more administrative subject matter would continue.

The general conclusion which we draw from these data regarding the environment of staff and church size in which a minister may find himself is that none of these changes in the minister's environment is nearly so

important as the minister's own motives and objectives. The addition of staff or the promotion of a minister to a larger church may not necessarily bring about a change in the quality of his communications; instead, as we have noted, this change may constitute a challenge and be something of an occupational hazard. In addition to this fact, there is the disturbing evidence that the minister may never become more of a spiritual guide or deal any more with religious ideas in personal communication, regardless of the staff made available to him or the size church he serves.

These findings give added weight to our emphasis upon the pastor's individual responsibility for himself and for the active direction of his parish, a responsibility which endures through all change. The larger church will bring its own difficulties, demand even greater multiplication of communication foci, and require more and more skillful integration at the top. Staff assistants will set up wheels of communication wherever needed to push out the frontiers in their own areas of responsibility, to the benefit of the whole parish. But in neither case will the senior minister be rescued from the dilemmas in which he finds himself. There is only one sure way for him to cut through prevailing norms and assume the professional role to which he was called, and that is by his own direct action.

Ultimate Objectives of Communication

The ultimate objectives toward which we have been working are implicit in all that has been said, but should now be made explicit and clear. Choosing the context of personality (not society) in which to lay

the foundation of a communication strategy, we have put full emphasis upon the effort of the individual person to organize his own resources for the achievement of vocational objectives. We have pointed to the need for recognizing personal limitations and moving beyond a closed personal network of communication to multiple foci, wheels within wheels, persons assuming full responsibility for their own communications within a framework of cooperative service. The integration of this team of communicators has been seen to hold both values and disvalues, and we have sought optimum benefits through enlightened and redoubled efforts of the individuals involved.

The relationship of individual responsibility and social cooperation which obtains for the church staff may be considered the prototype for the communication of other members of the church family, through whom the organization of the church exists. The object of the Church is to invite persons to assume full responsibility for their own wheels of communication in a larger environment of creative effort directed to the fulfilment of the Church's mission.

Such a large emphasis upon the importance of the individual member of the Church, characteristic of Christianity and a hallmark of the New Testament churches, will involve infinite care in communication, so that communication may be the means by which persons attain profound relationships with each other and with God, rather than be turned to propaganda to serve the causes of the ministry or the Church. Communication networks are established not for propaganda purposes or to help the minister get his work done, but as a means of expression and experience by which individual persons may grow and rise to the full height of their stature.

It will not be enough, therefore, for ministers to solve their problems by shifting them to the shoulders of others, for his freedom may be their slavery. More important is the experience coveted for all the members of the church of finding paths of adventuring which suit their talents, and through which they may enter larger realms of service and satisfaction.

The relationship of pastor and people, therefore, like the relationship among the clergy and laity, is to be guided by profound moral considerations. Such considerations are the subject of a penetrating analysis by Paul E. Johnson in the concluding section of The Psychology of Pastoral Care, where the distortions of a closed system of propaganda are set in contrast with the open communication which rests on a foundation of mutual appreciation and confidence. In such open communication other persons are regarded as worthy to bear the truth and share responsibilities, and relationship is the key to discovery.[1]

> The decisive question is always: How do we relate to other persons? The poorer the relationship, the less meaning we have to communicate. The better the relationship the more values we are able to develop. Values multiply as we learn from each other to appreciate them and realize how much more they mean as we value them together. Whether we suffer together in compassion or rejoice together in communion, we are blessed by a companionship of mutual understanding and love.[2]

This relationship of depth depends upon wholeness in perceiving each other, and demands treating persons for what they really are. This is not the most common practice today, when people are manipulated

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[1]Paul E. Johnson, The Psychology of Pastoral Care. (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953) pp. 324-330.

[2]Ibid. p. 328-329

and exploited, and individuality must be asserted against the pressure to conform. In our society emphasis is too often on the commercial or utilitarian value of a person, a subtle distortion of true human relations from which the Church, contrary to its professions, has not fully escaped. The parishioner, for example is too often elected to office to perform duties which no one else will accept, or is called upon to give major service to the Church in the field of his minor interests. In a more Christian system of communication a person would be chosen because of his sense of commitment, interest and ability; not only for what he could do for the job, but for what the job could do for him. Too often, as one minister pointed out in interview, we place people in jobs and leave them there forever, little concerned for the unfolding and development of their personalities.

The same sin is reflected in unexpressed attitudes toward the minister and his family. So little regard is usually shown for a pastor's native abilities while being absorbed in his practical abilities, so little attention given to what he might <u>like</u> to do instead of what he has to do, that it is proper to think of him as the mechanical man by which the parish gets its business done. What Official Board ever thinks of asking a pastor what he would like to do less of, or more of, in arranging a more satisfying schedule of work? How many parishioners give serious consideration to whether the minister's wife really wants to run a telephone answering service, or assume the duties of priestess at the Ladies Guild? A minister and his family, like everyone else, could live more meaningfully if freed from the stereo-

types of office and the playing of formal roles. As in other areas of church and national life, care must be taken not to de-personalize this person, who is, after all, an individual with his own special abilities to develop, aspirations to fulfil, and his own style of life to contribute to the total atmosphere of the Church. No Church has a corner on these precious insights, and there is everywhere the challenging possibility, as much among the clergy as among the laity, of engaging in more genuine communication which takes account of who a person really is, and what he wants to become.

Such a fellowship, based upon the recognition of a person's spiritual gifts, made possible the ministry of the whole congregation as practiced in the first century Church. This successful community, in which responsibility was held in common and leadership was shared broadly along lines of special ability and commitment; this community, which not only protected but greatly extended Christian fellowship in an unfriendly and threatening environment, may be regarded as the true prototype for church organization, and an ultimate expression of communication strategy. In this earnest fellowship of the faithful each member personally bore part of the responsibility of the ministry, in obedience to Christ's commands; indeed, the whole church was the ministry. From this congregation a host of leaders were elected to assure the achievement of the church's objectives in preaching, healing, teaching, worship, and fellowship. These leaders were chosen for their "spiritual gifts", and assigned on the basis of their sense of calling and commitment. Problems were discussed by a

council of elders who shared in the governing of the local parish, and standing in pastoral oversight over this entire process was the single person chosen to exercise spiritual leadership in council and congregation, the bishop. Here is a vivid demonstration of a dynamic community, absorbed and committed to the new community which Christ had called into being, made effective by generous and flexible leadership policies, held on course through the fearless efforts of the pastoral overseer, and fully Christian in method and objective. Its impressive survival in difficult circumstances may recommend it to modern churchmen for consideration.

What arrangement of ends and means would be more admirably suited to the situation of the twentieth century Church, set afloat on friendly waters, with a literate and enlightened laity abounding with talent and influence, and a clergy highly trained to provide specialized leadership in a challenging era?

The German Reformation was an attempt to establish the Church along these lines laid down in the New Testament, great emphasis being placed upon the scriptural Word of God, the authority of the congregation, and the priesthood of all believers. The barriers created by centuries of hierarchical tradition were broken through, and, at least for a time, people understood and reflected some of the glory of the early Church. In the twentieth century Church, deeply committed to democratic action, to dynamic patterns of leading and following, arrangements of responsibility by committee, and with the added advantage of an educated laity, it would seem we are well prepared to continue the Reformation which

began with Christ, of which Luther reminded us, and which is not by any means completed today.

It is by recalling the preeminent example of the New Testament Church and the ultimate Christian values and patterns of organization obtaining in it that we put the capstone on our own preliminary formulation of a communication strategy. We envision the Church as a community of interacting persons, each with his own destiny, gifts, and interests, seeking in profound and personal relationships to unfold the meaning of life. In this community of responsible persons sharing in the ministry of Christ and communicating with each other and the world by multiplied foci, genuine communication with men should reveal the possibilities of creative encounter with God, in ultimate concern for the meaning of human life.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Backgrounds in Theory and Research

The study of human behavior in the present research sets it clearly in the realm of psychology and particularly in the realm of social psychology, which is largely a development of the twentieth century. It is a study of Protestant parish ministers in the process of interaction with other individuals and groups. Taking communication as the unit of interaction the investigator borrows from the new field of communication studies, utilizing the particular concepts of communication contents, means, channels, and motives. The author assumes that communication events provide concrete expression of human relations, and that a large sample of communications from real life portray realistically the concerns and interaction patterns of those who are studied.

In addition to borrowing theory from these psychological sources, the author admits to a preference for experimental research. Consequently, the present program is carefully designed to yield systematic information, appropriately measured, verifiable, and capable of repetition. Results are presented in graphs and tables, and the data conservatively interpreted.

Historical backgrounds for this original study are found in the research literature of both religion and communication, to which a

full chapter is devoted. Communication research of four relevant types is summarized: studies of the effects of the mass media of communication, community-wide studies of communication, the study of communication variables in small experimental groups, and the study of communication in on-going social structures. Also summarized is a small body of research on the parish ministry performed in the last fifteen years, citing especially the works of Hartshorne and Froyd, Murray H. Leiffer, Richard Niebuhr, and Samuel W. Blizzard.

Research Design and Methodology

The present study differs in important aspects of methodology and design from the previous studies which were carried out with the aid of questionnaires.

Hartshorne and Froyd limited their study to the ministers of the Northern Baptist Convention, and Murray Leiffer limited his opinion poll to Methodist laymen. The Study of Theological Education in the United States and Canada, directed by Richard Niebuhr, focused major attention upon theological education and upon the historical roles of the clergy. Blizzard's study, not yet published, is the first and only study to be focused entirely upon the functions of the parish minister. This important study, based on a national sample from all denominations, sought information from the previous day regarding the activities of the ministry and the time occupied.

In contrast to these, the present study is set in the context of action research, yielding data recorded very close to the moment of action, and presenting a virtually complete sample of the professional

Protestant ministry in a greater urban neighborhood.

Vital information is gathered on each communication event occuring on one assigned weekday and Sunday, including the direction of communication in or out, the time begun and finished, time elapsed, frequency of uncompleted calls, the means of communication (26 possibilities), all topics of conversation, the topic which provoked conversation, the presence of direct criticism of the minister, the sex, marital status, and age of the communicants in decades, the use of prayer or sacraments, and the number of persons addressed.

Secondary data, derived not from questionnaires but from highly structured personal interviews, are used to supplement and confirm the primary data. Embedded in this interview were several inventories and psychological exercises designed to yield information on the occupation, insider and outsider status of persons contacted on weekdays, a judgment of the primary motive (giving or getting), the minister's function as determined by a five-category content analysis, and ratings on four possible selective factors in communication: degree of liking, needing, importance, and pressure of time. The minister's heavy participation in committees and groups, inside and outside of the church, was carefully surveyed to discover how often he was Chairman, had a regular assignment, felt the group was heavily dependent upon him, functioned as only a pastor could, and which would run perfectly well without him. The number of these activities and the time occupied by them was systematically tabulated.

Other data deriving from the interview were sought in the following categories: (1) vital statistics describing the minister and church; (2) the degree of his exposure to mass media of communication; (3) a series of questions bearing on the minister's role as administrator, organizer, pastor, priest, preacher, and teacher; (4) potential barriers to communication; and (5) the pastor's personal preferences, values, and convictions.

The population sampled is a group of fifty ministers who work in a New England greater urban area embracing over 150,000 persons. The sample of the professional ministry in the key city of Lynn, Massachusetts, and surrounding suburbs is virtually complete. The fifty ministers participated by recording vital information about each communication event which took place on one weekday and one Sunday assigned by the investigator. These assignments were made over a period of three months so as to involve a balanced number of the six weekdays, and a variety of Sundays. Twenty-one denominational groups are represented in this normally varied sample of ministers averaging eight years of college and seminary education, seventeen years in the ministry, and ranging in age from 25 to 67. Churches of all size were represented, membership ranging from 24 to 5,000.

Faithful recording of communications on Sunday was assured by the use of a special Sunday observer trained by the investigator, who followed the minister on Sunday to obtain a list of names in sequence to aid the minister in recall as he made full reports later in the day.

The primary data surrounding more than 2600 separate communications were transferred to IBM punch cards for processing by electronic sorting and tabulating machines.

Major Findings of This Study

Major findings were reported along four dimensions of communication: contents, means, channels, and motives.

The content or subject matter of communication was determined by means of an eight category content analysis utilizing a modified form of the role scheme used by Samuel W. Blizzard. Subject matter was classified as either: (1) administrative, pertaining to the work of the church office, promotion and publicity, ecumenical and denominational work, loose ends, etc.; (2) organizational, relating to the committees and groups of the church; (3) personal expressions of concern and care for health and happiness, attitudes and aspirations; (4) matters involving the explicit use of religious norms and ideas, philosophy of life or theology; (5) matters of general interest outside the immediate sphere of ministerial practice like social conditions, current events, etc.; (6) matters pertaining to worship and liturgy, prayer, or sacraments; (7) conversation relative to the delivery or contents of a sermon or speech; and (8) conversation about ideas developed in a teaching situation or class experience in which the minister was teacher.

Considering all topics of conversation, pastoral type events (personal, religious, general) account for 48% of the total, administrative for 31%, organizational for 11%, and the others less. In conversations initiated by the minister, equal emphasis is given to personal matters and administrative matters. Religious talk as such occurs only 2% of the time. Personal topics outweigh business topics 55% to 44%. When parishioners initiate conversation the orientation is predominantly

administrative, business concerns outnumbering personal concerns 53% to 47%.

Sunday conversation does not differ qualitatively from weekdays, the main difference being an increase of 92% in volume. Insiders and outsiders talk about the same things, generally speaking, except for a loss of organizational subject matter among outsiders. Insiders originate conversation to talk administrative matters twice as often as personal matters, and religious subject matter remains at a bare 3%. Conversations with outsiders show the strong personal orientation which appears typical of the ministers, although outsiders themselves originate communication more often on administrative subjects.

The analysis of the minister's function in communication indicates a high proportion (46%) of semi-professional or non-professional activity, and a relatively scant amount of spiritual guidance(13%).

The use of various means of communication varies through the day and night in a characteristic pattern which gives emphasis to telephone calls in the morning, home and hospital visitations in the afternoon, and group activities in the evening. A sharp conflict exists between media which involve great numbers of people for the least expenditure of time, and those which involve the least numbers of people for the greatest expenditure of time. A full 55% of the minister's weekday communications consume less than 4 minutes each.

Sunday brings a definite shift in use of communication media, nearly all categories showing a loss, in favor of an overwhelming rise

in passing conversation and consultations. Ministers generally retreat from communication on Sunday afternoon.

Involvement in groups and committees is heavy, ministers averaging 22 committees and groups, at an average cost of 67 hours per month. Most of these committees depend upon the minister to preside, perform some duty, or otherwise depend heavily upon him. Participation in groups is very general but with some sharp extremes, ministers both avoiding and inviting them by conviction.

Considerable use is made of mass media in the parish; 80% of the churches make use of the public newspaper, 82% use a weekly bulletin, and 58% have their own church paper. For most of the mass media produced, the minister bears major responsibility for writing and production.

Communication with those inside the Church accounts for 60% of the total communication, and outsiders for 40%. The largest group of insiders is the group of housewives (33%), and the largest group of outsiders is the professional group (33%). Most people contacted are in what might be called the white collar group; they make up a full 80% of all communications. Of the inside group about 20% are laborers, while in the outside group there are about half as many.

Men outnumber women in communication, and talk slightly longer. Male superiority of numbers holds for all hours of the day except 11 to 12 noon. Married persons outnumber singles 4 to 1 on weekdays and 3 to 1 on Sundays.

Ministers communicate with persons of all ages, but more with

persons in their thirties and forties than any other decade. The age dispersion holds steady on Sunday except for a sharp increase of contacts with teenagers on Sunday. Older ministers communicate almost as much as younger ministers, accounting for 55% and 45% of the total volume of communication, respectively.

Age is a selective factor in communication, preference being given to persons in one's own age range. This results in a general neglect of children and youth under twenty years of age. At least 90% of the communication is with persons who are well liked by the ministers. Next in importance to the degree of liking, is pressure of time, a full 70% of the minister's communication on weekdays being rated as pressing, quite pressing, or very pressing.

Communication is frequently among those who are needed and who are important to the church, but even more frequently with persons who are not especially needed or important to the Church.

When the degree of liking is low, then communication is most often explained by pressure of time, and vice versa, these two factors having high predictive value.

Ministers communicate primarily to give something (61% of the time) rather than to get something (39%); parishioners, on the other hand, communicate more often to get something (60%) more often than to give (40%).

Crucial Problems Formulated

Primary and interview data support the formulation of at least

five problems of communication which appear to be of crucial importance to the ministry and the Church.

(1) The Problem of Specialization arises in the search for vocational fulfilment, in the midst of major demands for semi-professional or non-professional services. The dispersion of communication contents shows a large preoccupation with administrative matters. It also indicates almost no activity of a strictly religious nature, including the discussion of sermon and class material, or mention of religious ideas in pastoral conversation. Only 62% of the ministers in this sample are generally happy with their present combination of roles; they want more pastoral work and less administrative. Fully 78% report concern about neglected areas of work; 70% do their own typing, and a full quarter do all the regular stenographic and secretarial tasks connected with the weekly bulletin. The problem of specialization is the problem of cutting out some area of major activity and competence based upon a sense of personal commitment and ability.

(2) The Problem of Supply and Demand denotes the struggle of the church to meet the rising popular demand for its services, a demand met too frequently by the pastor alone. There is a significant lack of equipment and office facilities, but more significant lack of personal assistance. Fifty-eight percent of the ministers work completely alone, only 10% have secretarial help, and 8% any professional help, full or part-time. In trying to do everything, ministers gravitate to routine, semi-professional functions, in denial of their calling.

(3) The Problem of Selectivity is a problem of bias, either conscious or unconscious, determining who is selected for communication. Ministers apparently prefer men to women, though the women predominate numerically in the Church, contact four times as many married persons as single, show a marked tendency to communicate most with persons their own age. When communicating with outsiders they move 52% of the time among the leaders of the community; with insiders they move 77% of the time among the most "frequent worshippers." White collar workers account for 80% of all communication, persons well liked for 90%.

(4) The Problem of Superficiality arises from over-absorption in communications of brief duration, fully 55% of the weekday conversations taking less than four minutes each. Most people are seen in unplanned and fleeting ways, by means of "passing conversation." The most popular means of communication on weekdays is by telephone. Serious conversations involving the discussion of religious ideas and their application to life are almost too rare to count. Spiritual direction is almost unknown, and teaching functions are assumed on a regular basis by only 30% of the ministers. Meanwhile the minister invests too much of his time in secretarial work involved in the production of printed letters, announcement folders, and church newspapers.

(5) The Problem of Sensitivity is a problem in the realm of reception of communication, or feedback. Sermons are almost never discussed beyond the habitual Sunday morning comment, however sincere, and direct criticism does not reach the minister more than 4 times out of 2600 cases. Ministers are generally available for communication

1/3 of the day only. Their schedules are overcrowded, 60% of the ministers report feeling that too many things are dependent upon them, half take no time off whatever, and only 14% take a full day each week. On Sunday, the day of most sensitive intellectual and spiritual effort, there is a 92% rise in communication, about half of it administrative. These facts describe a situation in which anxiety might be predicted and ministers are frequently too preoccupied by their own problems to give sensitive attention to others.

A Communication Strategy

To meet these communication problems, a preliminary formulation of strategy has been outlined, giving large emphasis to psychological considerations, in a historical framework of Christian values. This strategy lays primary stress upon the responsibility of the person at the center of every communication wheel, and calls upon the pastor to be the model communicator. This model behavior begins with a realistic recognition of human limits, and seeks to mark out an area of major competence in fulfilment of vocational goals. The subtle temptation of the Messiah complex which hazards this attempt is critically discussed.

Solution is advocated through the multiplication of communication foci whether in congregation or staff, permitting a true delegation of responsibility and independent action aimed at common goals. The model for the pastor and for all other communicators is the same, consisting of a basic pattern of personal responsibility, requiring genuineness of relationships based upon a recognition of personal limits, and the choice

of tasks with reference to ability and a sense of calling. This communication pattern is compared with the successful pattern of communication in the New Testament Church, in which there was a genuine ministry of the whole congregation under the direction of a pastor whose major area of specialization was spiritual oversight and preaching.

Ultimately, communication is seen as a means of grace by which growth may come, meaning may unfold, and persons may be brought into creative encounter with each other and with God.

Numbered Conclusions

The following specific conclusions are offered:

(1) Judging from his communications, the major role of the minister today is that of pastor, with the role of administrator an extremely close competitor.

(2) In their actual conversations as well as in their expressed preferences, ministers definitely move away from administrative functions toward pastoral functions, while parishioners and others make greater demands for an administrator than for a pastor.

(3) Heavy involvement in committees and groups gives new prominence to the role of organizer, an unfamiliar role in which the ministers are not well adjusted and appear to lack strategy.

(4) The more professional aspects of the ministry involving direct attention to religion in either pastoral, priestly, preaching, or teaching situations is mainly a Sunday phenomenon, all of these put together accounting for only 11% of the weekday conversation. Other data also support the conclusion that the minister's function in the

modern parish is only semi-professional, giving rise to wide dissatisfaction with present vocational roles.

(5) In spite of this serious attrition of professional roles and loss of vocational focus, ministers seem unable to cut out a sphere of major activity and competence for themselves, and to interpret this specialization to their congregations.

(6) Lacking office facilities, equipment, and personnel, churches are not well organized to supply the increasing demands being made upon them, expansion and improvement being severely limited in a communication network corresponding roughly to a single overloaded wheel with the minister at the center.

(7) Ministers themselves are in difficulty as receivers of communication because their status creates barriers to criticism, their schedules make them unavailable most of the day, and their overinvolvements in parish detail tends to make them insensitive and unapproachable.

(8) The threat of superficiality appears in the overwhelming number of very brief and passing conversations, and the investment of considerable time in the preparation of impersonal mass media. A countertrend is seen in the practice of pastoral calling and counseling.

(9) Communication within rather select channels, indicated by preferences for persons who are well-liked, worship frequently, are male and married, of the same age group as the minister, and in white collar occupations, calls attention to the role of the minister's

motives in the development of church communities.

(10) A communication strategy to deal with these problems will have to give first consideration to the minister's motivations and vocational goals, tendencies toward the Messiah complex being especially important.

(11) The need for multiplied foci of communication suggests the merit of solution by staff, but this study indicates that, although staff personnel may be of direct benefit to the congregation, they do not directly effect the actual communications of the minister. Instead of solving the minister's problems, staff may constitute something of an occupational hazard by intensifying and postponing the problem of specialization.

(12) Greatest hope is seen in a modern reformation which might renew a true ministry of the congregation, in which the laity would assume responsibility for meeting the demands and opportunities of the day, in accord with their own ability and sense of calling, permitting the minister a professional function similar to that of the spiritual overseer in the New Testament Church.

APPENDIX I

SAMPLE AND SAMPLING STATISTICS

Locations	No. of Ministers	Population Figures
Lynn (Mass.)	34	100,000
Saugus	7	17,000
Swampscott	4	12,000
Lynnfield	3	3,900
Nahant	1	3,000
Marblehead	1	15, 900

Number of Ministers Reporting Each Month

November, 1956	15
December, 1956	16
January, 1957	19

Number of Ministers Reporting on Weekdays

Mondays	7	Fridays	10
Tuesdays	8	Saturdays	8
Wednesdays	7	Sundays	50
Thursdays	9		

Number of Ministers reporting on Sundays

Sunday #1 (November 11, 1956),	10
Sunday #2 (November 18, 1956),	5
Sunday #3 (December 2, 1956),	8
Sunday #4 (December 9, 1956),	8
Sunday #5 (January 20, 1957),	9
Sunday #6 (January 27, 1957),	10

Sundays of the Month Represented

First Sundays,	8	Third Sundays,	14
Second Sundays,	18	Fourth Sundays,	10

DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION OF MINISTERS

Methodist	14
African Methodist Episcopal	1
Congregational	7
Baptist	
Zion Baptist	1
Conservative Baptist	4
Liberal Baptist	2
Episcopal	4
Lutheran	
Augustana	1
Missouri Synod	1
Universalist	2
Nazarene	2
Disciples of Christ	2
Unitarian	1
Evangelical Mission Covenant	1
Salvation Army	1
Assembly of God, Pentacostal	1
Open Bible Standard	1
Polish National Catholic	1
Greek Orthodox	1
Society of Friends	1
Presbyterian	1
	50

APPENDIX II

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

REPORT OF SINGLE COMMUNICATION EVENT

174

1. COMING IN FROM ☐ / GOING OUT TO ☐ THEIR NAME _____

2. TIME BEGUN : A.M. OR P.M.
   TIME FINISHED : A.M. OR P.M.

3. INCOMPLETED ☐ (NO ANSWER, BUSY, NOT HOME)

4. TYPE OF COMMUNICATION* _____

5. PLEASE LIST ALL TOPICS OF CONVERSATION AS THEY OCCUR:

A _____

B _____

C _____

D _____

E _____

F _____

6. CIRCLE WHICH TOPIC YOU CONSIDER THE ORIGINAL REASON FOR CONTACT.

7. CHECK IF THERE WAS ANY SPECIFIC CRITICISM OF YOU DURING CALL ☐

8. SEX
   MALE ☐
   FEMALE ☐

9. MARITAL STATUS
   SINGLE ☐ MARRIED ☐ WIDOWED ☐ WIDOWER ☐ DIVORCED ☐ SEPARATED ☐

10. AGE GROUP (GUESS)
    CHILD 1–10 ☐ ADULT 11–19 ☐ ADULT IN 20's ☐ ADULT IN 30's ☐ IN 40's ☐ IN 50's ☐ IN 60's ☐ OVER 70 ☐

11. CHECK IF ANY USE WAS MADE OF SACRAMENTS ☐ OR PRAYER ☐

12. NUMBER OF PERSONS ADDRESSED IN THIS COMMUNICATION ☐

*SAMPLE TYPES OF COMMUNICATION FOR ITEM 4:

(PERSONAL)	(MASS)	(SMALL GROUPS)	(LARGE GROUPS)
1. TELEPHONE CALL	9. FOR PUBLIC PRESS	15. CHURCH COMMITTEE	22. RADIO
2. PERSONAL LETTER	10. FOR CHURCH PAPER	16. OTHER COMMITTEE	23. WORSHIP SERVICE
3. HOME VISIT	11. FOR WKLY. BULLETIN	17. CHURCH GROUP	24. SERMON
4. HOSPITAL VISIT	12. FORM LETTER	18. OTHER GROUP	25. SPEECH
5. COUNSELING SESSION	13. DISPLAY MATERIAL	19. SPONTANEOUS GROUP	26. OTHERS _____
6. CONSULTATION	14. OTHERS _____	20. CLASS LECTURE	
7. PASSING CONVERSATION		21. OTHERS _____	
8. OTHERS _____			

Supplementary Study of Personal Communications in the Weekday Sample

13. NAME _____ OCCUPATION _____

IF IN YOUR CHURCH:

14. A lay leader ○
chairman, officer

15. A lay worker ○
active in group, committee

16. Worshipper
frequent ○
occasional ○
rare ○
shut-in ○
away ○

17. Personal assistant or staff

IF NOT IN YOUR CHURCH:

18. Leader of some community group, committee or organization ○

19. Protestant ○
Roman Catholic ○
Jewish ○

20. New prospect for the church ○

21. Family or social friend ○

22. Politician ○

23. Stranger ○

WHAT DO YOU THINK WAS THE PRIMARY MOTIVE OF THE CONTACT ? (Check one)

24. TO GIVE SOMETHING:
Counsel, advice ○
information ○
instructions ○
spiritual guidance ○
some other service ○

25. TO GET SOMETHING:
counsel, advice ○
information ○
instructions ○
spiritual guidance ○
some other service ○

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR DEGREE OF FEELING ON THE FOLLOWING SCALES:

26. HOW WELL DO YOU LIKE THE PERSON?
5 very well
4 well
3 quite well
2 fairly well
1 not too well
U unknown

27. HOW OFTEN DO YOU NEED HIM ?
5 very often
4 often
3 quite often
2 fairly often
1 not too often

28. HOW PRESSING WAS THE CALL JUST THEN ?
5 very pressing
4 pressing
3 quite pressing
2 fairly pressing
1 not too pressing

27a. HOW IMPORTANT IS HE TO THE CHURCH ?
5 very important
4 important
3 quite important
2 fairly important
1 not too important

OUTLINE FOR STRUCTURED INTERVIEW
David B. Chamberlain

DETAILED SUMMARY OF SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION

29. A - G WHAT COMMITTEES DO YOU ATTEND REGULARALY ?		30. A - G WHAT GROUPS DO YOU ATTEND REGULARLY ?	
1.		1.	
2.		2.	
3.		3.	
4.		4.	
5.		5.	
6.		6.	
7.		7.	
8.		8.	
9.		9.	
10.		10.	
11.		11.	
12.		12.	
13.		13.	
14.		14.	
15.		15.	
* 16.		16.	

— CODING KEY —

A. You are the Chairman

B. Depends heavily upon you

C. Ties you down with a regular duty

D. Will run well without you

E. You function as only a Pastor can

F. Outside the local church

G. Total time occupied per month

* Original instrument provided space for 22 committees and groups.

Interview

29. How old are you?

30. How many years of education beyond High School have you had?

31. Are you a part-time or student pastor?

32. How many years have you served this church?

33. How many years have you been in the Ministry?

34. How many members are on the church roll?

35. How many new members have come in during the last 2 years?

36. What is the size of your church budget (total)?

37. Would you mind telling me your total salary (include expenses paid)?

38. Is there any paid staff?
None
Secretarial Help Only
Professional Help Only
Both Secretarial and Professional Help

39. Do you have any other volunteer staff on a weekly basis?
A secretary? When?

40. How well do you use a typewriter?
Not at all:
Hunt and Peck:
Easily (with apologies)
Easily and well (no regrets)

41. Do you know how to operate a mimeograph machine?

INCOMING COMMUNICATIONS

42. Is there a television in your home?

43. What newspapers do you read regularly?

44. What magazines do you faithfully peruse?

45. How many radios do you have?

46. How many books did you read through during the last month?

Interview cont.

47. Do you view any religious television programs regularly?
frequently?
occasionally:
rarely:

48. Do you listen to any religious radio programs regularly?
frequently?
occasionally:
rarely:

49. How often do you hear another man preach? Frequently
Occasionally
Rarely

50. How often do you hear yourself preach? (tape, radio) Regularly:
Rarely:
Never:

ROLE QUESTIONS - Administrator

51. Who types your letters? Minister
Wife
Secretary
Other

52. Who keeps track of records of membership, baptism, marriage in your church? Minister: Other:

53. Who keeps track of changes in address, telephone numbers, new names, etc.? Minister: Others:

54. Is there a central file or mailing list for your entire constituency?

55. Do the committees and organizations of the church have such lists of their own to facilitate their work?

56. Do you have a comfortable office to use at the church?
at home

57. Do people visit you there frequently? --Home
occasionally? Church--
rarely?

58. How many telephones do you have: at home:
at church:

59. Do you have at your immediate disposal, adequate instruments of the following types: Typewriter

60. A dictation device: what?

61. Tape or wire recorder?

62. A duplicating machine?

63. Public address system? Sanctuary only: Movable:

64. Motion picture projector

65. Slide and filmstrip projector

66. Opaque projector

67. A projection screen

68. Adequate display space, Outside: Inside:

69. A phonograph - variable speeds?

70. Does your church use a Sunday Bulletin? (The worship order, plus notes)

71. What duties do you customarily perform with regard to the Sunday Bulletin?

	Writing part?	All?
Typing stencil		
Mimeographing		
Folding		
None		

72. Do you have a church paper? Yes. No.
    Weekly
    Monthly
    Other

73. What are your regular duties in connection with this paper?

	All:	Parts:	One Column:
Writing			
Typing stencil			
Mimeographing			
Folding			
Addressing			
Stamping			
Mailing			

74. Do you send out general letters to the parish from time to time? When?

    Fall opening
    Financial canvass: How many?
    Christmas
    Lenten
    Easter
    Others

Interview cont.

75. In addition to writing such letters, what else do you personally have to do to get them out?

76. Who writes your local church publicity for the newspapers? Minister:
Other:

77. How regularly is this done: Rarely
Occasionally for something special
Weekly

78. Are you able to carry on enough personal correspondence with family and friends to satisfy you?

79. Do you take time off each week? Yes: A day
No: Different times

80. Of the following, which are a more or less constant problem in your administrative work:

Delay
Interruption
Schedule overcrowding
Neglected areas of work
Unanswered correspondence
Too many things depending upon me
Printed matter you never get to

81. Who answers the phone and takes messages when you are out?
Wife Secretary Nobody

82. When are you most often available to receive communications?

Mornings
Afternoons
Evenings

83. Who is generally informed of important decisions you are trying to make, and helps you to make them?

Staff
Wife
Others
Nobody generally:

PREACHER ROLE

84. What preaching opportunities do you have beyond the Sunday morning service?

None:
Other services in the church:
Outside the church:

85. What speaking opportunities do you normally have during the week?

Normally none:
At church:
outside the local church:
at non-church functions:

86. Do you have some set practices of sermon preparation? For example:

a. A regular time for preparation? When?

b. When do you usually choose the topic?

c. When do you do the most work on it?

d. How far ahead to you usually have topics scheduled:

e. Do you have any set reading time for sermon preparation?

f. How advanced is your preparation usually? To manuscript:
Full notes:
Outline only:
Without notes:

g. How long is the average sermon? Minutes:

h. What use do you generally make of stories? Rare:
Occasional:
Broad:

PRIEST ROLE

87. What services or rites do you conduct apart from the Sunday morning service?

88. How often do you use prayer with parishioners during the week?

Frequently
Occasionally
Rarely

89. How often do you distribute Communion to parishioners during the week?

Frequently
Occasionally
Rarely

90. Is there a regular place in your schedule for work of spiritual direction? No: With individuals?
With group?

Interview cont.

PASTOR ROLE:

91. Do you keep track of the number of pastoral calls you make during the year? How many did you make last year?

92. How do you feel about the subject matter of these calls? (Are you getting to talk about the things you want to talk about for example?)

93. Do you call on members who are in the hospital? How often?
Daily
A few times a week
Once during their stay

94-95. With what communication events do you customarily surround the wedding ritual?
For example: How much pre-marital counseling do you do as a rule?

Time: See them once before marriage: Rehearsal:
twice before: Reception:
three times before:
after:

As a rule, do you use any materials, books, or tests? (underline and list)

As a rule, do you introduce any questions about birth control, or sex?

96. With what communication events do you usually surround the Christian funeral?
Home call previous:
Funeral home call:
Home call after:
Follow up later: When?

97. Is most of your home calling a matter of emergency, crisis, or special need? Yes: No:

98. Aside from emergencies or special needs, do you follow any systematic plan to see everybody in your parish?

On arrival at the church only:
Once a year, attempted at least:
A regular share of calls are routine:
More than once a year:

Interview cont.

99. Do you have any regular counseling hours?

100. Are you counseling with anyone on a continuing basis now? No:

From your own parish:
From outside your parish:

101. Do parishioners generally come to you with their personal problems?

102. During the last year have you referred any persons to other professional workers such as a physician: to a social worker:
psychiatrist: to a lawyer:
psychologist:
pastoral counselor:

103. Can you name from memory one professional worker in each of these categories? (Write out name)
Physician
Psychiatrist
Psychologist
Pastoral counselor
Social Worker
Lawyer

104. What occasion do you normally take to communicate with children?

105. What occasion do you normally take to communicate with youth?

106. What occasion do you normally take to communicate with the aged?

TEACHER ROLE:

107. Do you teach any classes as a regular thing? (weekly)
Name and Type of class: Subject matter:
Youth:
Men only
Women only
Combined adult

108. Do you do any other teaching during the year? (not weekly)
List:

109. Have you developed any techniques for training lay leaders in your church?
YES (list)
NO

110. With what communication events do you customarily surround baptism?

111. With what communication events do you customarily surround the reception of new members into the church?

Any announcements:
Letters
Home calls
Training sessions: (how many?)

CONCLUDING ON ROLE: I have been asking questions about your communication practices as they affect your various roles as general administrator, preacher, organizer, priest, pastor, and teacher. These six roles express the diversity of our function in the Church.

112. Would you say you are generally happy with your present combination of roles?
Yes.
No.

113. What would you like to do <u>less</u> of: (list)

114. What would you like to do <u>more</u> of: (list)

115. Some suggest that church organization itself is in need of reform. What reforms in church organization would help you in the exercise of your ministry?

116. Does being a Minister give you unusual opportunities to communicate?

117. Are you ever refused entrance into a home? Never
Rarely
Often

118. Are you granted free access to patients in the hospital?
in rest homes ?

THE FLOW OF INFORMATION:

119. Do you get timely information regarding parishioners in crisis or need, from: (Check if problem)
The parishioner himself, or his family:
From other parishioners:
From the hospitals
From funeral directors

120. By what means of communication do you learn the current feelings, attitudes, or problems of your constituents?

Unorganized-informal
Parish calling
Sunday information slips
Others:

121. Who customarily apprises you of criticism which is at large?

Staff
Personal assistants
Close friend
Officials
From person involved
Nobody "customarily"

122. Do you have any regular way of communicating with the people who are absent from church on a given Sunday morning?

123. What means do you use for communicating with your whole constituency at once?

Parish paper
Parish letters
Sunday bulletin
Others:

124. What groups of people would you like to communicate with who are usually left out?

125. Rank in order of use, the means you usually take for communicating with individual officers and leaders of your church:
(Indicate rank, 1, 2, 3, 4)

Telephone:
Letter:
Home call:
Pre-meeting Caucus:

126. Have you found any rather new or unusual ways to communicate with your people?

PROBLEMS OF CONTROL

127. Are there some phases of your work which are especially exhausting?

128. How many handshakes and greetings did you have last Sunday morning? (By observer's report)

Interview cont.

129. How many personal conversations were noted? (Observer's report)

130. Are you in circulation before Sunday School? No:
during Sunday School: No:
following Sunday School: No:

131. Are you available for communication just before Church service?
after Church service:

132. Do you maintain any privacy on Sunday morning? When and how many minutes:

133. Is Sunday more tiring than other days?

134. What do you do to protect yourself from overexertion on the Sabbath?

135. Do you make any special effort to prepare physically for Sunday?

Saturday:
Saturday night:
Sunday morning:
Sunday afternoon:

136. At times other than Sunday, do you have any system to control interruptions, and maintain privacy?

Privacy for study?
No telephone in room
Hide-away
Phone answering service; appointments
Nothing

137. Do you feel compelled to answer the phone when it rings? Yes. No.

PREFERENCES

138. Which particular types of communication do you enjoy most?

139. Which do you dislike the most?

140. For which types of communication do you feel especially qualified?

141. Which communication activities are usually the first to go, when you are pressed for time?

Home calling:
News releases:
Mail:
Others:

Interview cont.

142. Some observers call attention to the process of de-personalization in modern society, and in the city. Do you sense any dangerous trends toward de-personalization in the work of the minister as well?

143. In the competition for the minds and hearts of people today, what do you consider to be <u>our</u> greatest handicap; not the handicaps presented by the world, that is, but our <u>own</u> handicaps?

144. In trying to communicate the gospel to the people in your parish today, what do you consider your most effective means of communication?

End of Interview

APPENDIX III

OTHER STATISTICAL TABLES

TABLE 13

COMMUNICATION VOLUME AND VOLUBILITY WITH RELATION TO CHURCH SIZE

MINISTER'S VOLUME AND VOLUBILITY	SIZE A 24 - 162 MEMBERS AVERAGE = 88	SIZE B 167 - 286 MEMBERS AVERAGE = 230	SIZE C 290 - 572 MEMBERS AVERAGE = 452	SIZE D 577 - 5000 MEMBERS AVERAGE = 1,230
PERCENT OF TOTAL CONTACTS	22	25	20	33
PERCENT OF TOTAL TOPICS	23	25	20	32

TABLE 14

MINISTER'S AGE AND INVOLVEMENT IN GROUP ACTIVITIES

GROUP INVOLVEMENT	AGES OF MINISTERS			
	QUARTILE I Ages 25 - 30 AVERAGE = 30	QUARTILE II Ages 36 - 40 AVERAGE = 38	QUARTILE III Ages 41 - 48 AVERAGE = 44	QUARTILE IV Ages 49 - 69 AVERAGE = 58
AVERAGE NUMBER OF GROUPS	22	24	22	21
AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS	71	70	73	54

Table 15

THE MINISTER'S INVOLVEMENT IN INFORMAL GROUPS

TYPES OF INVOLVEMENT	WEEKDAY EPISODES	SUNDAY EPISODES
Total Number of Informal Groups Appearing in Study	34	76
Subject Matter:		
Administrative	14	23
Organisational	9	17
Personal	19	23
Religious	0	4
General	19	14
Priestly	4	33
Sermon	1	1
Class	0	4
Number of Persons Involved	502	1532
Time Taken, by Mode In Minutes	5	1

Informal group contacts include those too brief to calculate in the regular way, and those which arise out of spontaneous conversational groups. Small groups average five members and last for about five minutes on weekdays. Larger group contacts occur more on Sundays, take about one minute, and are usually of a priestly nature. Ministers who communicated in this informal way averaged four episodes a day and twice as many on Sunday. The total number of people involved is significant, averaging ten per minister on weekdays. On Sundays, except for priestly episodes, administrative and personal subjects predominate, while on weekdays personal and general subjects are most characteristic of activity in these informal groups.

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COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS IN THE PARISH MINISTRY:

AN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY OF FIFTY PROTESTANT MINISTERS

IN A NEW ENGLAND CITY

(Publication No.)

David Barnes Chamberlain, Ph.D.
Boston University Graduate School, 1958

Major Professor: Professor Paul E. Johnson

ABSTRACT

Designed within the framework of communication theory and utilizing psychological methods, a study of the Protestant parish ministry has been made yielding basic vocational information, and permitting the formulation of five major problems confronting the ministry and the Church today.

Vital information about each communication which took place on one weekday and one Sunday in the life of each minister was systematically collected by a self-recording technique. All topics of conversation were gathered for content analysis. The methodology of this study differs from others made in this field in deriving primary data of communication from records made close to the moment of action, employing extensive follow-up interviews, and representing a virtually complete sample of the professional Protestant ministry in a greater urban area of 150,000 people.

Primary data were transferred to IBM punch cards and processed electronically; statistical results are presented in thirty-two tables and illustrations. Analysis is made of the contents, means, motives, and

personal network of communication, providing answers to the questions: What does the minister talk about? By what means does he communicate with others? To whom does he communicate, and why?

On the basis of primary and interview data five crucial problems of communication are formulated: (1) the problem of specialization, arising from the desire for vocational fulfilment, but largely frustrated by an overwhelming need for non-professional services; (2) the problem of supply and demand, which calls attention to the Church's failure to provide facilities and manpower to meet rising demands, and the inadequacy of a communication network corresponding roughly to a single wheel with all lines converging at the center, the minister; (3) the problem of selectivity or bias, indicating the degree to which the minister's conscious and unconscious preferences interfere with the establishment of truly cosmopolitan and inclusive Christian communities; (4) the problem of superficiality, indicated by the heavy predominance of incidental contents, brief contacts, and impersonal means of communication; and (5) the problem of sensitivity, of remaining a sensitive receiver of communication in spite of the serious barriers created by status, schedule, and preoccupation with parish detail.

Judging from his communications, the major role of the minister today is that of pastor, with the role of administrator a close competitor. In actual conversation as well as by stated preference, ministers move away from administrative functions toward pastoral, while parishioners and others call upon them more often for administrative than for pastoral services. Heavy involvement in committees and groups, averaging one-

fourth of all working time, gives new prominence to the organizational role, a role in which the minister is not well adjusted, and lacks strategy.

The more professional ministry involving direct attention to religion in either pastoral, priestly, preaching, or teaching situations is mainly a Sunday phenomenon, all of these put together accounting for only 11% of weekday conversation. A large proportion of ministers in this study are dissatisfied with their present vocational roles. Yet, they seem unable to cut out spheres of major activity and competence for themselves, and to interpret this specialization to their congregations.

In outlining a strategy of communication to meet the situation, the author begins with a consideration of the pastor's own motives and vocational goals, laying particular stress upon the hazards of the Messiah complex. In asserting the need for multiple foci of communication, he analyzes the effects of staff on the actual communications of the pastor, and critically evaluates the staff-solution to the minister's dilemma. Greatest hope is seen in a renewal of a true ministry of all believers under the direction of a spiritual overseer, the pattern of communication which prevailed in the New Testament Church.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

David Barnes Chamberlain was born on February 27, 1928 in West Haven, Connecticut, the sixth child of Roy and Lulu Briggs Chamberlain.

He was educated in the public schools of West Haven, and at Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, Virginia, receiving the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1949 with a major in English. For one year he served as a Counselling Fellow at Washington State College, Pullman, Washington prior to his entrance in the School of Theology of Boston University. The degree of Bachelor of Sacred Theology was awarded cum laude in 1953, at which time he entered the Boston University Graduate School to pursue doctoral studies in the field of psychology and pastoral counseling.

Mr. Chamberlain was ordained into the Methodist ministry in May 1953 and served for four years as pastor of the South Street Methodist Church in Lynn, Massachusetts. In 1957 he became a full member of the New York East Conference of the Methodist Church and was appointed to the Newfield Methodist Church in Bridgeport, Connecticut, where he continues to serve.

While an undergraduate, he was appointed Instructor in English at Randolph-Macon College and student assistant in Educational Psychology. At Boston University he served as a Teaching Fellow in the Department of Psychology and Pastoral Counseling.

A member of the American Psychological Association, he received training in counseling at the Pastoral Counseling Service, Boston University, and the Pastoral Counseling Center of Lynn, Massachusetts. He is also a member of Omicron Delta Kappa, honorary society for leadership in college affairs, and Pi Gamma Mu, an honor fraternity in Social Science.

The Reverend Mr. Chamberlain is married to the former Jane Mayo of Dublin, New Hampshire, a graduate of Mount Holyoke College and the Harvard-Radcliffe Management Training Program. They have two sons, Allen Scott, three, and John Christopher, one, and reside at 1231 Stratford Avenue, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

David Barnes Chamberlain